

A decorative, ornate frame with a double-line border and intricate scrollwork at the top and bottom. The frame is light-colored and stands out against the dark background.

THE  
REVELATION  
OF  
JESUS CHRIST

◆◆ H. C. WILLIAMS ◆◆



BE 2827

AN 72

Unknown

Section







# The Revelation of Jesus Christ

A Study of the Apocalypse

By  
H. C. WILLIAMS

“Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand.”—Rev. 1: 3.

CINCINNATI

THE STANDARD PUBLISHING COMPANY

Copyright, 1917  
The Standard Publishing Company

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
PREFACE .....	5
INTRODUCTORY ESSAY—PROPHECY.....	7
I. PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION.....	37
PART I.	
II. VISION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS..	47
III. LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES.....	61
PART II.	
IV. VISION OF HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR .....	79
V. OPENING THE SEALED BOOK.....	96
VI. OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS....	115
VII. THE SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS .....	137
VIII. THE THREE WOE ANGELS.....	152
IX. THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK....	174
X. TEMPLE MEASURED.....	187
PART III.	
XI. THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON.....	207
XII. THE WILD BEASTS.....	227
XIII. THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY.....	250
XIV. DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON THE GREAT..	284
XV. ZION'S GLAD MORNING.....	321
XVI. THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS.....	337
MEANING OF THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS .....	361
TOPICAL INDEX.....	369



## PREFACE

THIS book is not published to exploit any new theory, but to aid, if possible, the great mass of the people, who are groping their way in the darkness, seeking the light, but finding it not; hungering for the truths of God's word, but not apprehending them. Feeling that God would not reveal himself in a manner that man could not understand, the writer has devoted many years to a patient study of the symbolism of the Scripture. He has tried faithfully to comply with the injunction of Isaiah: "To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them." The Bible gives the divine interpretation of every symbol used in the prophetic portions of the Scripture. The understanding of the imagery of any prophet is simply a matter of discovering the Scriptural usage of the symbols employed. The Book of Revelation is easily the most precious and vital volume of the Scripture to the child of God. It is from Revelation, alone, that the rays of light must come to light up the pathway of mankind through the ever-deepening gloom of the present time. It reveals all of the events connected with the Christian dispensation from the time of the visions until Jesus comes.

When the beautiful imagery has been under-

## PREFACE

---

stood according to the divine usage, the matter of its fulfillment is simply that of placing the Scripture record side by side with authentic history, for prophecy is history in anticipation. The fulfillment of many of the prophecies of the Old Testament is found in the New Testament, but the events which John wrote of were to be fulfilled centuries after the Bible was complete. History must come to our aid, therefore. The results are striking. Faith grows by leaps and bounds as event after event is found to be the accurate fulfillment of that which had been foretold.

The second purpose in publishing this book is the hope that it will so simplify this remarkable, but unread, prophecy that many who have thought it a mystery will turn to its blessed pages and have their lives enriched by their study. The author is indebted to many minds of various opinions, but most of all to the heavenly Father and to his precious word, of which David said: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Having found this subject of interest to thousands of people during a busy ministry, the author commends its patient, reverent study to all of his brethren in the ministry, that all of those for whom Christ died might be ready and waiting for the coming of the King.

LINCOLN, Nebraska.

H. C. WILLIAMS.

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

### PROPHECY

THE Bible is the most marvelous and wonderful book in all of the world's literature. It is unique. It is in a class by itself. When Walter Scott lay dying, he said to his servant: "Bring me the book." On being asked what book was meant, he replied: "The Bible. There is no book but the Bible." The characteristic that distinguishes the Bible, and renders it unique, is the divine element which surcharges every page. The mighty theme of redemption, unfolded step by step with ever-increasing clearness, from creation's dawn through the changing centuries and millenniums to its glorious climax in the Book of Revelation, reveals a unity of thought and purpose which could come only from the mind of God. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me; *declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done*" (Isa. 46:9, 10). Men live and die, and their books are discarded by the succeeding generation. The theories held as most surely true by writers of one century become obsolete and are contradicted by the thinkers of the succeeding century. This is not so with the Bible, although it

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

was written by about forty different authors during a period of sixteen centuries. It is like a wall laid course upon course. Each succeeding layer of stone would be impossible without the preceding layers upon which to rest. The New Testament, with its characteristics that mark it as so different from the Old Testament, declares that "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (Matt. 5:18). The Old Testament is the foundation upon which the New Testament rests. The New is the fulfilling and unfolding of the Old, and would be impossible without the Old. "So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24). This harmonious outgrowth of each succeeding portion from the preceding one reveals the hand of one master Builder who laid "line upon line and precept upon precept" until the completed book revealed "the whole counsel of God." There is about the Bible a grandeur of conception and a sublimity of expression beyond human ability. There is a potency in the book that transforms the lives of individuals and changes the character of nations. The book is possessed of a vitality which has preserved it to the present time despite the fiercest assaults of the combined forces of evil. There is a purity so transcendent and a morality so comprehensive, pervading the teaching of the Bible, that could come only from the mind of God. Above all, the Bible is unique because it reveals the Man whose perfections are divine, defying the ability of the most gifted human intellect to create. He is the



## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

heart and body of the book. He is the one who satisfies the soul-hunger of the human race. When the world was young, Job felt the need of a "days-man" or an "umpire" to stand betwixt him and God. All of the prophets longed to see him, "searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point to, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them" (1 Pet. 1:11). The aged Simeon might well say, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart, Lord," for there is nothing more for the human heart to desire but to stand in the presence of the King of kings. He is the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the valley, the bright and morning Star. His name and mighty works diffuse the pages of this sacred book with ineffable glory, and its far-streaming light guides the storm-tossed mariner to the haven on the eternal shore.

No book is like the Bible. It is God's will made known to "holy men of old," and transmitted to us as they were "moved by the Holy Spirit." It "is able to make one wise unto salvation" and "furnishes completely unto every good work." Its treasures are rich and inexhaustible. The further one fathoms its depths, the brighter and more resplendent are the jewels of truth discovered. Peasant and king, the simple and the savant, the weak and the powerful, drink alike of its refreshing streams, and rejoice. Wise is the man who reverently searches the Scriptures with a prayer for guidance, for the eyes of his understanding will be opened and his life will be enriched.

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

The Bible contains history and poetry. The mighty deeds of the heroes of the dim and distant past are emblazoned there that all generations might know how the fabric of our civilization has been woven. There we see the divine hand deftly working into the warp and woof of human history the cords made scarlet with the blood and sacrifice of men of faith and of the Man of Galilee. From the loom of the ages a tapestry appears wherein he has woven, out of the tangled skeins of the national life of all peoples, wondrous figures, shaping and fashioning them according to his own will. The ear attuned to the melody of the infinite will there catch the sweetest strains of song that ever fell from human lips. There the divinest harmonies, swept from harp-strings by angel hands, give us a foretaste of the heavenly music that shall thrill the redeemed in the celestial city. There thought divine is voiced in sublimest phrase.

The Bible contains biography and letters of instruction. In no other book can one find truer records of the lives of men than these found in the sacred Scripture. They reveal the fault and imperfection as faithfully as the commendable traits of character. These men whose names have been snatched from oblivion and placed in the divine scroll of fame by the Scripture writers are the ones who have wrought for the betterment of humanity and have made possible the hope of eternal life. The books of instruction open up to all mankind the glorious privileges of the gospel, and guide men in their conduct toward each other as "they are

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit."

The Bible contains prophecy. The subject-matter of eighteen of the sacred books of the Scripture is predictive. Here we find the record of the visions of prophets and seers who foretold events, and the movement of men and nations, centuries and milleniums before they occurred. These prophetic records give information that only God could know, and their exact and complete fulfillment is the seal and guarantee of the entire book. Prophecy is the impregnable fortress that the hosts of Satan can not overthrow; the unfailing bulwark of Christian faith.

At the present time there is a tendency to neglect the study of the prophetic portions of the Bible. The ministry, as well as the great mass of professed Christians, seems to be imbued with the idea that the predictive element of the Scripture defies reasonable and sane interpretation, and that it can not be definitely and certainly understood. So much has this spirit taken possession of the Bible readers of the present time that these eighteen books might as well have been translated in an unknown tongue or left out of the Bible entirely. Their messages are unknown, their warnings are unheeded and their rich blessings unclaimed, because, forsooth, we are obsessed with the fallacious notion that the heavenly Father would mock his children by revealing the momentous future events in such a way that they could not be understood. As a result, the race has lost its bearings. Without a compass or a chart

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

humanity drifts, and, being unable to recognize the meaning of the gigantic struggle between the nations, can not determine how near it is to the journey's end.

This hesitancy upon the part of Bible readers to investigate prophecy is due to two main causes. First, the tendency of a certain class of theologians to deny the miraculous and to discard all Scripture which can not be explained upon a rationalistic basis. Whenever these men utter a statement it is usually buttressed with the claim that "all scholars are agreed." The number of ministers who are overawed by these extravagant claims, and hesitate to investigate independently lest they should be thought unscholarly, is altogether too large. Second, prophecy has been brought into disrepute because of the time-setting propensities of so many misguided, though conscientious, people. We can not forget the warning that "the Scripture plainly foretold" that the "world was coming to an end in 1844," and again in 1866 and 1870 and 1914. The fact that the world still moves in its orbit undisturbed makes men suspicious of all claims that any definite information may be obtained by a study of prophecy. Thus one of the portions of the Scripture of most vital importance to the well-being of humanity is being neglected by the masses by reason of misconception and through fear of ridicule.

**Value of  
Prophecy** Our minds have been too easily blinded by the boastings of so-called scholarship and by the patent blunders of professed students of prophecy.

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

A little consideration will bring to light the fact that while these erred as to the character of the event expected to happen in a certain year, yet by the aid of prophecy they were able to hit upon those years in which events vital to the life and progress of the church, as well as to mankind at large, occurred. The year 1844 was the one in which the Ottoman Government was compelled to issue a decree of religious toleration. A most eventful year was 1866, and marked the struggle between the Papacy and Protestantism, culminating in the events of four years later. The year 1870 was a momentous one in human history. The pretensions to temporal power by that arch-conspirator against Christ and his church—the Pope of Rome—received their death-blow in that year. He was forever bereft of temporal power, and Rome, with its provinces, was incorporated with the kingdom of Italy, Oct. 9, 1870. The year 1914 marked the beginning of a titanic struggle of the nations of Europe. Surely that portion of the Scripture which enables men to point out unerringly the years in which crucial changes will occur, although at fault as to their nature, is so important as to merit the most careful and reverent study by all men.

Another consideration should challenge the thought of those who have neglected the prophetic books. The Bible is God's book. The predictive portions did not "come by the will of man." The amount of space devoted to a subject ought to be a true gauge of its relative importance in the divine estimation. Three-fourths of the subject-matter is



## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

devoted to prophecy. In addition to the eighteen books already mentioned, the types and shadows of the Old Testament must be included in this subject. The lives of men like Adam and Joseph and Joshua are but pictures of One to come in the future. Incidents like that of the sacrifice of Isaac look forward to a future event. Even the events connected with the journey of the Jews from Egypt are said to have "happened by way of example." Most of the wonderful parables of Jesus and much of his teaching are predictive. Many of the statements of Peter and Paul are concerning events in the future. If prophecy is unimportant and can not be understood, then three-fourths of the Bible is useless and might as well never have been written. The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. If three-fourths of the sword can not be used, the remaining one-fourth can do but little execution. On the last night of his life Jesus prayed for his disciples, saying: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17). The Word is the means through which sanctification is attained, and if three-fourths of the Word is not available as a sanctifying power, our means of grace is limited indeed. Prophecy is the most vital subject contained in the Scripture record, unless we challenge the goodness of God and his wisdom in devoting so much space to its utterance. The love of God precludes the idea of a useless theme.

A third consideration emphasizing the importance of prophecy will be found in its use by Jesus and his inspired apostles. A striking example of Jesus'

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

use of prophecy in his teaching is found in Luke 4:16-21. After reading from the prophet Isaiah, he closed the book and said: "To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears" (v. 21). Basing his sermon upon the definite fulfillment of prophecy, it is not to be wondered that its power should be apparent and that his hearers should marvel "at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth." Another instance is found in Luke 24:24-27. When Jesus would lay an everlasting foundation for the faith of the two companions on the way to Emmaus, he chided them for their failure to "believe all that the prophets have spoken." "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." Numbers of similar instances of Jesus' use of prophecy may be found. Matthew continually calls attention to the fact that the various incidents in the life of Jesus are the fulfillment of prophecy, and such expressions as "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through the prophets," are common. When Peter preached the first gospel sermon, the major portion of it consisted of argument that the prophecies of Joel and David had been fulfilled in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and in the resurrection of Jesus. So convincing was that argument that about three thousand souls obeyed the gospel. Again, in his sermon recorded in the third chapter of Acts, Peter calls to witness "all of the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after." The immediate results were that the number of men who

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

believed "came to be about five thousand." When Stephen made his memorable defense, he chose two prophecies as the climax of his argument (Acts 7:42-50). When Philip would win the Ethiopian for Christ, he chose Isaiah's prophecy of the suffering Messiah as his text. When Peter would preach the gospel to Cornelius, he declared: "To him bear all of the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins." Paul had recourse to the prophecies of the Old Testament, and uses them with convincing power in his address at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:16-42). He that would minimize the importance of prophecy has failed to see the emphasis placed upon it by the Master and his inspired teachers. When Christ's church is to be built, it is upon the "foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone" (Eph. 2:20). When the organization of the church was determined upon, "he gave some to be apostles: and some, prophets," etc. The prophetic function is next to the apostolic in the church of Christ. The glorious light of prophecy is "as unto a lamp shining in a dark place," and "ye do well that ye take heed until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." It is a rich blessing, a precious gift, and the notion that the prophecy of the Scripture can not be understood is fostered by the father of lies to impoverish our lives. If we fail to investigate these wonderful revelations of God in type, symbol and vision, we have denied ourselves the protection of one of the strongest



## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

fortresses of faith and the sanctifying power of the major portion of God's word.

**Prophecy—Its  
Scope and Pur-  
pose** Before any intelligent investi-  
gation of the subject can be  
made, a few primary principles  
must be well in mind. Nothing

is more essential than to banish all preconceived ideas and reverently accept the dictum of the Scripture. "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." The Scripture will surely speak as authoritatively upon the subject of prophecy as upon the subject of the "plan of salvation." "To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them" (Isa. 8:20). Approaching the predictive portion of the Bible with the calm and unswerving confidence that the heavenly Father would not reveal unto his children things which would be of no advantage for them to know, and without providing the means of understanding them, we find that the principles of prophecy unfold upon investigation and its difficulty disappears as dew before the morning sun.

"Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing, except he reveal his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). The assurance given us in this passage is definite and certain. No event which concerns the interests of humanity, and with which God has to do, will ever occur without God first reveals it to his servants the prophets. The rise and fall of nations, as these affect the fortunes of the church, and all of God's dealings with

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

the redeemed and with the forces of sin, are included within the scope of the prophetic record. The prophets are entrusted with the secret of the Lord's doings before they come to pass. Now, this store of wisdom concerning future happenings was not committed unto the prophets for their own edification and information. It was entrusted to them for the edification and instruction of others. This is indicated in an incident in the life of Abraham as recorded in Gen. 18:17-33: "Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?" It was because God regarded the posterity of Abraham that he made known unto him the destruction of Sodom and the cities of the plain.

That the revelation vouchsafed to the prophets was not given for the benefit even of the generation in which they wrote is plainly stated in 1 Pet. 1: 10-12: "Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow them. To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you, did they minister these things." This passage of Scripture is the end of all controversy. We learn from it the following facts:

1. That the things written in prophecy are not

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

the results of human invention or knowledge. The Spirit of Christ spoke through the prophets. This is corroborated by 2 Pet. 1:21: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." To neglect the patient investigation of these prophetic messages is to neglect the words of the Spirit of Christ. To bring discredit upon them in any way is to discredit the Spirit of Christ.

2. We learn that the prophets did not even comprehend their own writing.

3. We find that the information given to the prophets was not for their advantage at all, but for the edification of generations still in the future.

We of this glorious dispensation are the heirs of all the ages. The treasure-house of prophetic truth is stored with the wisdom of the Spirit of Christ. Its riches have not been disturbed nor dissipated. They remain intact as our inheritance. We have but to open the door to enter into the full enjoyment of what God has revealed. With special reference to the Book of Revelation, the angel which "signified" it pronounced a blessing upon those who would study it, saying: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Rev. 1:3).

Again, another passage of Scripture gives us an indication of the scope and purpose of prophecy. "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

words of this law" (Deut. 29:29). The scope of our study is here limited to "the things which are revealed." We can make no inquiry into that which has not been foretold, for the "secret things belong to God." The failures of so many in the past have been due to their eagerness to work out the details of future events which have not been revealed. "The day and the hour" of the coming of the Son of man is known only to the mind of God. However, the things that have been foretold "belong to us and our children for ever." We have the right and privilege of investigating and using all that belongs to us. We notice that what has been foretold belongs to us for a purpose—"that we may do all the works of this law." The knowledge of that which has been foretold enables, strengthens and helps us to do the will of God, and it is especially noted that that which is revealed "belongs" to the chosen people of God.

The development of faith is the clearly expressed purpose of prophecy, as is stated by Jesus himself: "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe" (John 14:29). What need we, who are buffeted on every side, more than faith? Living in an age of careless indifference to divine things and of the extravagant boastings of scholarship, no greater boon could be desired than that of the strong assurance that God still lives and is ordering the movements of men and nations according to his will, and to the eternal redemption of his children through Christ Jesus. Within the household of faith perverse men have

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

arisen, who through feigned words are attempting to destroy its foundations. We live in a grand and awful age, when all of the power of Satan will be exercised in his death-struggle to maintain his rule over the souls of men. It is not strange, then, that "in the later times some shall depart from the faith," nor that the Master should look forward to the days in which we live, and say with such manifest anxiety: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" It will be fruitless for us to pray, "Lord, increase our faith," if we neglect the divinely appointed means for the development of faith. Prophecy is the mighty fortress in which the Christian's faith is secure. The human mind must yield to the convincing power of the fulfillment of prophecy. If we can place our finger upon events that are occurring now, and which were clearly predicted millenniums ago, no storm can shake the faith which has been begotten in the Bible as God's book, and in the Christ of the Bible as our Saviour, and in the promises of the Bible which belong to us.

We need comfort also. What would the world, with its burden-bearing, its bitter disappointments, and its sorrow, be without comfort? Prophecy comes to us as the divine source of comfort. After giving in brief outline the events leading up to and including the first resurrection and the union of the saints with their Lord, Paul says: "Wherefore, comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:18). We need light. Darkness like a pall enshrouds our pathway. We can not choose our



## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

steps unaided. We can not, with our mortal eyes, future. We have the "word of prophecy made penetrate the veil that hides the hour yet in the more sure: whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." Prophecy is the lamp placed in our hands, and whose far-streaming light reveals the signboards along the heavenly highway. Its gleam even reaches to the walls and the towers of the new Jerusalem, and bathes it in a halo of glory. We are to use this lamp for our guidance all through the dark night and until the dawn of the glorious day when "we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Not until we stand within the gates of the city will we have no need for the "lamp" of prophecy to dissipate the world's spiritual gloom.

**How to Under-stand Prophecy** The subject of prophecy presents to the mind of the average Christian many difficulties that have no real basis in fact, but are imaginary. He has witnessed the failure of many vaunted claims of accurate knowledge of this portion of the Bible, and has read so many contradictory interpretations, that he feels that it is a forbidden field. While we would not minimize the real difficulties encountered in any careful study of prophecy, yet those which appear so forbidding to the majority of Bible readers are only superficial and will disappear before patient and persistent examination and study. Once these are swept away and the treasures of God's message are revealed, the soul of man responds

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

with a new-born faith that can bear all things until "his appearing and his kingdom." Like Jason, who encountered the brazen bulls in his quest for the Golden Fleece and conquered them by a simple expedient, so the reader of prophecy, by boldly facing the obstacles to his search, will find himself in possession of a reward greater than that which inspired the Argonauts of the long ago.

To declare that prophecy is incomprehensible and not susceptible to investigation is to impugn many of the plainest statements of the Scripture. Some of these fell from the lips of Spirit-filled apostles, and some were uttered by the Son of God himself. Two disciples of Jesus were journeying to Emmaus. The Master joined them, and during the conversation he said: "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken." It is inconceivable that he would thus chide these men for their ignorance of the prophecies that had gone before, if they could not be understood. In the incident of Dives and Lazarus, Abraham is represented as saying to his petitioner: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." It would be a harsh and unreasonable thing to demand that the eternal salvation of these five brothers should depend on an intelligent comprehension of the instruction of Moses and the prophets, if such was impossible. The injunction of the apostle Peter to take heed to prophecy, "as unto a lamp shining in a dark place," would be equally unreasonable if its message is unintelligible. We have, therefore, the Scripture warrant for our investiga-

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

tion, although some may question our mental poise on the one hand, or difficulties seem insurmountable on the other.

The proper way to enter a house is to find the door, and, if it does not respond to our efforts to open it, apply the key and unlock it. This plain illustration will serve to indicate the only approach to a profitable study of prophecy. The door to the treasure-house of predictive wisdom will not respond to the touch of every individual. The ability to understand will depend upon the spiritual character. "Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, for they are spiritually judged" (1 Cor. 2:14). It is only by the aid of the Spirit of Christ in us that we may "know the things that are freely given to us of God."

In the concluding chapter of Daniel the promise is made that "the wise shall understand." One might hesitate to make any confident statement as to the teaching of the prophets, lest he seem to boast of superior wisdom, but the word "wise" in this connection does not describe one possessed of profound learning in the wisdom of the world. The word "wise" is the opposite of the word "wicked" in the preceding phrase. "None of the wicked shall understand; but they that are wise shall understand." It refers to "those who purify themselves and make themselves white." It carries the idea of "prudence," as of a servant who faithfully strives to do his master's will. The man who



## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

earnestly seeks to know and do the will of God will attain unto wisdom that will enable him to understand more and more of the prophetic message. Jesus indicated the same thing when he said: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17).

Peter lays down the first principle for our guidance in prophetic study. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation" (2 Pet. 1:20). We can not understand one portion of the prophetic record without viewing it in its relation to the whole, for each portion is related to, and is vitally connected with, the one transcendent theme that had its origin at the gate of Eden, and, developing gradually through the centuries, reached its glorious culmination in the isle of Patmos. Prophecy is progressive. It appears first "as the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear." It is as an author writing a book whose theme is all embodied in the first word on the title-page. Then, word by word, sentence by sentence, and chapter by chapter, the theme unfolds and develops until it is complete in the final word on the last page. A little spring appears in the garden of Eden, and starts on its journey toward the great sea of eternity. As its waters trickle down through the patriarchal age it enlarges somewhat from the tiny rivulets flowing into it from other springs, but during the Jewish dispensation it broadens and deepens as streams and rivers flow into it. During the apostolic age mighty streams of prophecy, clear

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

as crystal, flowing from the lips of the Master and Peter and Paul, are added to its volume, and, sweeping on, it finishes its course at the end of the first century, and there in the Book of Revelation we behold the mighty river of prophecy mingling its waters in the crystal sea. That enigmatical utterance that fell upon the ears of our first parents has been developed step by step as patriarch after patriarch sketched in here a little and there a little; as prophet after prophet wrote "in divers portions," until the book of prophecy is complete. Well might John say as his closing word: "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book" (Rev. 22:18, 19). The prophetic stream had reached its journey's end.

As the first course of stone laid in the foundation forecasts the outline and general detail of the building that is to be reared, so the first prophetic utterance reveals the scope of all that which is to be revealed afterward. As the workmen toil from week to week, new details appear which were not observable when the first course of stone was laid, and not until the building is complete do all the details blend together in an imposing structure. So with prophecy, the beauty and harmony of all its lines do not appear until the entire structure has been finished by the master workman of Patmos.

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

The first prophetic utterances were but the most meager outlines, and the matchless symmetry of the completed form did not appear until the "holy men of old," each in his own time, had added the details that had been revealed. It is plain, therefore, that "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." Every detail is only a part of a harmonious whole, and can only be fully comprehended in its relation to that whole. Only by patient and continuous study until we have grasped the scope and purpose of the entire body of prophecy can we hope to comprehend each detail in its relation to the whole.

It is also evident that with each succeeding age the prophet's message will become less obscure and dim as new and minuter details are given. We see this abundantly illustrated in passing from the Old to the New Testament. In the Old Testament the prophecies concerning the past and future restorations of the children of Israel are so intermingled that in the Jewish mind they were blended into one momentous event when the kingdom of David would be re-established. For this reason the disciples expected, as they witnessed the divine approval of Jesus in signs and wonders which he did, that the consummation of their hopes was at hand. The prophecies concerning the first and second advents of our Lord are so blended together in the Old Testament that it was easy for the self-conceited, Pharisaic mind to conceive of him as appearing but once, and to mistake his second coming for his first. After Jesus consummated the purpose of his

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

first advent on Calvary as the "suffering servant," a second advent "in power and great glory" is clearly revealed in the New Testament. As the New Testament is written, the restorations of the children of Israel are clearly distinguished from each other. One has already taken place, and the other, a glorious one, will occur at the end of the Christian age, after that "a people for his name" have been taken from the Gentiles. So Paul says: "How that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in a few words, whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ; which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (Eph. 3:3-5). The New Testament writers were privileged to have a clearer and fuller insight into the meaning of events which had previously been foretold than had been accorded to those who had gone before. It is plain, therefore, that the prophecies of the Old Testament can only be fully comprehended as we study them in the light of the teaching of the New Testament. The New fulfills and unfolds the Old. It illuminates the Old.

The prophetic portions of the New Testament show this same increasing clearness as we proceed from the annunciation of the angels, through the dark sayings and parables of Jesus, to the close of the inspired Book. Step by step, as we proceed, the light grows brighter and brighter, until in the Book of Revelation it shines forth with a brilliancy

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

as from the full-orbed sun, illuminating all of the dark places and making plain the course of all the events of the future. The Book of Revelation is therefore the clearest and most comprehensive of the prophetic portions of the Scriptures. How rich is that blessing which has been bestowed upon us of the Christian dispensation, that we should be privileged to read the mysteries hidden from the foundation of the world in the full flood-light of the crowning revelation of Jesus Christ. If the awful judgments of God, with their attendant miseries in the destruction of Jerusalem, came upon the Jews because they knew "not the time of their visitation" (Luke 19:44), what tribulation will be ours if we do not know the time of our "visitation" nor recognize the approach of his coming with the "angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus" (1 Thess. 1:7, 8).

Again, another principle will assist the student in his search for the meaning of any prophecy. Every prediction of Scripture has its mate; that is, the fulfillment corresponding in every detail with the prediction. "Seek ye out of the book of Jehovah, and read: no one of these shall want her mate; for my mouth, it hath commanded, and his Spirit, it hath gathered them" (Isa. 34:16). Here is where Bible readers have made so many mistakes, seizing upon an event as the one predicted because it corresponds in a general way to the prediction. A description of a criminal is sent to a strange city: the measurements, the color of the hair, and



## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

eyes, and any physical marks that will distinguish him from all others. The detectives keep a lookout for him. They do not imprison every man who corresponds in a general way to the description. They find the man who corresponds in all details to the description given. Students of prophecy should be equally careful. Occasionally a man may be found who corresponds in every detail to the description given. He denies he is the one wanted, and proves by reputable witnesses that he was in one city at the time that the crime was committed in another city. Thus the time element distinguishes when all the other details seem to correspond with the event predicted. If this rule had been followed, no one would have mistaken 1844 or 1870 or 1914. The chronological details must not be overlooked as we seek for the mate to the prediction.

Not only do the predictions of the Scripture have mates in their fulfillment, but they are given in couplets. That is, the event, or series of events, predicted are foretold in two or more corresponding prophecies. A simple illustration of this is found in the two dreams of Joseph (Gen. 37: 5-11). Here, in the first dream, Joseph and his brethren are binding sheaves in the field and their sheaves made obeisance to his sheaf. In the second dream the sun and moon and eleven stars made obeisance unto him. Both of these dreams refer to one and the same event still in the future. Therefore the chronological element is the same in both dreams. The obeisance of the eleven stars corresponds to the obeisance of the eleven sheaves, but in the

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

second dream there is the added detail of the obeisance of the sun and moon. In Gen. 40:9-23 we have another illustration of the same principle. The butler dreamed of a vine having three branches. He pressed the grapes that ripened upon the branches into a cup, and gave the cup into Pharaoh's hands. The baker dreamed that he had three white baskets on his head, and the uppermost one was filled with baked food for Pharaoh, but the birds came and ate the food. From the interpretation given we see that the three branches of the one correspond to the three baskets of the other. They are three days. Thus we see the time element is the same in each dream, but other details are different. The fulfillment of one dream will concern the butler and the other will concern the baker. Pharaoh receives the wine from the butler in one case, but in the other Pharaoh receives no baked food from the baker, for the birds devour it. Another instance of the same principle is recorded in Gen. 41:1-7. Here we find dreams doubled also. The seven fat kine correspond to the seven ears of grain, rank and good. The seven lean kine correspond to the seven thin ears. Both dreams refer to the same series of events, and the time element is the same in each dream. Now, the reason for this repetition of a prediction is expressly stated: "And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh, it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass" (Gen. 41:32). Thus, almost at the beginning of the Bible, the rule for the divine arrangement of prophecy is laid down for our

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

guidance. Every prophecy of the Scripture will have its companion or mate, and these should be placed side by side and compared with each other. If the time element is mentioned in one prophecy and not mentioned in the other, we may be sure it is the same in both, for they are mates. If other details mentioned in one are not found in the other, we know they belong there because both predictions concern the same event, or series of events. These mates corroborate each other, strengthen each other, and illustrate each other. No prophecy can be fully understood apart from its companion or companions. Thus again is emphasized the statement of Peter: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation" (2 Pet. 1:20). An examination of the Book of Daniel shows that this is the divine arrangement. It naturally falls into two parts, one ending with the sixth chapter and the other beginning with the seventh chapter. The visions of the first part are from the viewpoint of Nebuchadnezzar, a world ruler, while the visions of the second are from the viewpoint of Daniel, a prophet of God. They are companion prophecies foretelling the progress of events until the final consummation—the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. The time element is the same, and the variation in details is due to difference in viewpoint. The same is true of the visions in chapters 2 and 4. One is the vision of a great image and the other of a great tree. While the time element is mentioned only in one vision, it applies to both, for the image and the tree reveal the same series of events con-



## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

nected with the rise and fall of nations until the establishment of the everlasting kingdom. In both visions the starting-point is given with the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. In the vision of the great tree the period of madness continues for seven times. At the end of these seven times a change would take place in the heart of Nebuchadnezzar, who in the vision is made to represent all Gentile kingdoms. He then will acknowledge the supremacy of God and yield to his rule. It indicates the time when the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ. The same time element controls the vision of the image, for they are mates. From the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (606 B. C.) seven times, or 2,520 years, will intervene before the stone begins to crush the kingdoms which are represented by the toes of the image. This establishes 1914 A. D. as the year in which the crushing process begins, and determines the meaning of the struggle in which the European nations are engaged. They are being ground to powder, and they, with all Gentile governments, will disappear as chaff of the summer threshing-floors. At the completion of the crushing process a sweeping and radical change has been effected. Instead of the forms of government represented by the image and its toes, the stone itself becomes a mighty kingdom that fills the whole earth. In the fourth chapter we find the record of Nebuchadnezzar becoming insane for a period of seven years. As Nebuchadnezzar is made to represent all of the succeeding Gentile rule under the figure of the

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

tree, so the seven literal years of his insanity are made to represent that larger period of 2,520 years that must elapse until the nations yield to the supremacy of Christ. The year in which Nebuchadnezzar's literal insanity began is the year from which the 2,520 years must be counted to determine the date of the coming of our Lord. "And the nations shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isa. 60:3). Here we see how carefully the date of the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's literal madness is omitted, and no detail is given that will enable us to determine it. We only know that at some time during a reign of about forty-five years is the point from which the 2,520 years are to be counted. Students of prophecy should realize that the day and the hour of the coming of the King can not be determined. In the brief period of about forty-five years, continuing from 1914 to 1959, will be accomplished the overturning of all forms of earthly government. During the briefer period from 1959 to 1972 will be fully accomplished the rapid development of the stone into the great mountain or kingdom that fills the whole earth. In the lifetime of many now living this wonderful revolution shall be completed. This gives us opportunity to set our houses in order, that we may not be caught unawares. It is a grand and awful time in which we are privileged to live, as will be developed in the following chapters. The King of glory is now "even at the door." The sublimest spectacle of the ages will soon occur. Awake, O sleeper, and, with your lamp trimmed

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

and burning, be ready for his glorious appearing.

In the conclusion of this chapter attention must be called to imaginary difficulties that discourage the average Bible reader when he approaches the subject of prophecy. The events are foretold and the details are given in language seemingly difficult to understand. He is confronted with wild beasts of various kinds, dragons, mountains, earthquakes, winds, candlesticks, and other symbols equally incomprehensible as he ordinarily interprets words. This difficulty is more apparent than real. In ordinary speech we understand words in the sense determined by the common usage. When the prophets use a word, its meaning is determined by the prophetic usage in the Scripture. When one comes to a symbol which he does not understand, a little patient investigation will show the meaning attached to it by other prophets. In the earlier written languages symbols were used to express definite ideas. The same is true of Scripture symbols. Each represents a definite and unchangeable idea. The Scripture usage determines what this is. It will give a definition for every symbol used. So let us "speak where the Scriptures speak." Patiently and reverently we handle the Book. As we turn its pages we find that where there are mysteries and concealed treasures, a key has been left for our use. Jesus explained some of his own parables that his disciples might be guided in their understanding of the others. Divine interpretations have been given to many of the most important prophecies of the Scripture so that the children of

## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

---

God might have a rule of interpretation exactly as in mathematics, where we usually find a problem solved at the beginning of the lesson that the student might have a pattern for the solution of the unsolved problems that follow. So with the words and symbols: none will occur but the Scripture will "thoroughly furnish" us its meaning.

Following these principles, no man can study the prophecies of the Bible without his life being enriched and his faith strengthened and his heart purified. Especially as he turns to the crowning prophecy of the ages and beholds, with the apostle John, the sublime climax of it all in the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ "with power and great glory," will he be thrilled by its indescribable grandeur and his lips will join with the angelic choir in a mighty pæan of praise to Him that reigneth for ever and ever.

## CHAPTER I.

### PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

WE now approach the study of the sublimest portion of the Bible. It easily surpasses all of the preceding prophecies in sweep of conception and grandeur of expression. It is the fitting climax to the revelation of God to man. All of the prophetic utterances of the centuries of the past find in this unique book their clearest and most comprehensive expression. It stands in the same relation to the preceding prophetic record that the gorgeous full-blown rose sustains to the plant that bears it. The roots found in that enigmatical utterance in Eden—"He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel"—developed into a tree during the intervening centuries, and the Book of Revelation is as the ripened fruit, luscious and satisfying. Preliminary to an understanding of the message it contains, a few facts in regard to authorship, time of writing, and circumstances surrounding its composition must be established.

#### Author

The writer of the Apocalypse gives his name as John, and describes himself as the "servant" of Jesus Christ, and as a "brother and partaker" with the disciples of the seven churches in tribulation. That the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

author is the apostle John is evidenced by all the early Christian writers. Irenæus describes the author of the Apocalypse "as the disciple of the Lord," and as the one "that leaned upon his bosom." This is confirmed by other writers of the first centuries following the apostolic age.

**Time** The time of the writing of the Apocalypse is a most vital factor, for the time element in the book is related to this date. The things revealed were to "shortly come to pass" (ch. 1:1), and "things which must come to pass hereafter" (ch. 4:1). If we know the time of the writing of the book, we have the starting-point for the events revealed to begin, for they must "shortly come to pass." Since the author was John, its date must lie during his lifetime. The particular period of his life in which the book was written was when he suffered banishment "in the isle of Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" (ch. 1:9). The date of this particular experience is given by Irenæus (130-202) in these words: "It [the revelation] was seen no very long time ago, but almost in our generation, at the close of Domitian's reign." Jerome gives the date of the exile in the fourteenth year of Domitian, and says that John returned from Patmos under Nerva. According to Clemens, he returned "after the death of the tyrant." Summing up the evidence, we find that the revelation was given to the apostle John in the years 95 or 96. Domitian's reign began in 81 A. D., and the fourteenth year would be 95 A. D. The last year of



## PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

---

Domitian's reign was 96 A. D., he being slain on September 18 of that year. If John returned from Patmos during Nerva's reign, the duration of his exile could not be extended more than a year and three months, for this ruler died January 25, 98 A. D. The year 96 A. D. may then be settled upon as the approximate date of the book.

### Place

The place where John was permitted to behold the panorama of human history and the future tribulations and final triumphant victory of the church was the isle "called Patmos." This was a rocky islet about a mile wide and seven long. It was but eighteen or twenty miles from the mainland. Here the aged apostle was placed after bearing testimony to the Lord Jesus for sixty-six years. All of the other apostles had long since departed to be with Christ, and he alone remained to "fill out the sufferings of Christ" in the flesh. Lonely, indeed, must have been the days of his imprisonment in such barren surroundings, not knowing how those Christians on the mainland were faring under the persecuting hand of a cruel tyrant. That narrow, wind-swept sea would but tantalize this aged soul as he gazed across its heaving bosom. It was a barrier between him and those he loved, and his great heart longed to encourage them in their tribulation and tell them "to love one another." Under such trying circumstances, Jesus Christ sent an angel unto the one whom he loved, granting him a glorious vision, and, through him, sending to all of his servants a revelation of ineffable glory.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

**How to Study**            The casual reader professes to find it difficult to understand the Book of Revelation. To be sure, it is a difficult book and possibly it contains mysteries that will not be revealed until the Saviour himself shall come, but, in the main, most of the difficulties will disappear if one gives to it that patient, continuous and prayerful study that its vital and glorious message demands. There are three simple rules that must be observed if we wish to sense the clearness of the apocalyptic visions of John, and, if these be followed, the student will be rewarded with the unfolding of a book of marvelous beauty and simplicity and with a greater faith.

First, the book should be read and reread many times without any attempt to understand the meaning of its mysterious symbols, until the outline of its structure is clearly grasped by the mind. The more the Apocalypse is read, the more apparent it will be that its construction is as symmetrical as that of a Grecian temple, and its plan will become more clear and transparent.

Second, the outline having become distinct, attention can be given to understanding of the symbols used. The words which we use to-day are understood by the meaning attached to them at the present time. The apocalyptic language of Revelation must therefore be understood according to its usage in the Scripture. Such symbols as sun, moon, seas, beasts, horns, etc., carry the meaning that the prophets commonly give to them. We have the open Bible before us. It will show what is the

## PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

---

meaning of every sign and symbol used by the seer of Patmos. It must be remembered that the revelation of God is given in "words which the Holy Spirit teacheth," and they must be understood according to the usage of the Spirit. A patient examination of the Scriptural usage of any symbol will determine its meaning.

Third, it must be remembered that the items recorded in this book are "things which must come to pass hereafter." After the last page of the Bible is written, these prophetic details are to be fulfilled in great historic events. It is plain, therefore, that the Bible can furnish us no record of the fulfillment of the mighty struggles so graphically foretold in this book. We must be patient students, then, of history's pages, for in them only can we find fulfilled the event described and foretold in symbol. Attention must be given to every detail of the vision, even to the minutest, in order that we may certainly locate the particular event described. It is at this point that so many students of prophecy have failed. When a description of a criminal is sent out to the various cities, every detail is given, as far as is known, by which he may be certainly identified. Officers seeking for him will not arrest any man who corresponds only in part to the description in their possession, for many men might possess many of the characteristic features of the particular individual wanted. The identity is determined by the fact that one man corresponds in every particular with the description. The absence of a scar or a mole upon a particular part of the body of a sus-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

pected person will be sufficient to show that he is not the man sought for, if those marks are given as being possessed by the criminal. The same principle will apply in our study of prophecy. The Apocalypse gives a symbolic description of certain future historical events. Unless we can definitely identify them as they come to pass, or after they have occurred, the prophetic record would be of no value to us. Therefore we must conclude that sufficient descriptive details have been given by the prophet to establish the identity of the event referred to, and to certainly distinguish it from all others. It only remains for the reader to be sure that the established features of an historical event correspond in every detail to the prophetic description. This principle leaves no opportunity for divergent interpretations of prophecy. No two historical events are identical in every particular, and one can not be mistaken for the other.

### Structure

The theme of the book is *the coming of Christ*. This is the outstanding utterance of the prologue: "Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they that pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over him" (Rev. 1:7). This is the last word of divine revelation vouchsafed to the children of men. "He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). The introduction consists of the first eight verses. The Apocalypse proper begins with ch. 1:9, and continues to ch. 22:5. The epilogue, beginning with ch. 22:6, concludes the book.

## PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

---

The Apocalypse proper consists of three parts. Each part is introduced by a glorious vision. Part I. is included in chs. 1:9-3:22. Part II. is included in chs. 4:1-11:18. Part III. is included in chs. 11:19-22:5. The events foretold in the different parts do not follow each other in chronological order, for the three parts are parallel to each other. They are mates, and they begin at the same time and end at the same time. They are three witnesses testifying from three viewpoints as to the progress of the course of events from the end of the apostolic age unto the time of the new heavens and the new earth. They thus explain each other and corroborate each other. "At the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." Part I. is introduced by a vision of seven golden candlesticks (ch. 1:9-20). Part II. is introduced by a vision of the door opened in heaven (chs. 4 and 5). Part III. begins with a vision of the open temple in heaven (ch. 11:19). Part I. records the moral and spiritual changes which are to occur in the visible church till the coming of Christ. Part II. foretells the progress of the struggles between earthly governments and the divine, until "the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ" (ch. 11:15). Part III. is the record of the struggles to occur between the spiritual church and Satan, and continuing until the church is enthroned as the Lamb's wife and Satan is cast into the lake of fire. This prophetic history is separated into seven periods, marked in Part I. by seven churches and in Part II. by seven

# THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

seals. In this part the period included under the seventh seal is separated into smaller divisions marked by seven trumpets. In Part III. there are seven vials that are parallel to the seven trumpets in Part II. The relation of the parts to each other may be visualized in the outline chart below.

INTRODUCTION.		
——— Inscription. Ch. 1:1-8. Prologue Proper. Ch. 1:4-8.		
96 A. D.—PART I.	96 A. D.—PART II.	96 A. D.—PART III.
Vision of the Seven Candlesticks. Ch. 1:9-20. ——— MESSAGE. ——— Ephesian Church. Period ch. 2:1-7 Smyrna Church. Period ch. 2:8-11. Pergamum Church. Period ch. 2:12-17. Thyatira Church. Period ch. 2:18-29. Sardis Church. Period ch. 3:1-6. Philadelphia Church. Period ch. 3:7-13. Laodicean Church. Period ch. 3:14-22. Christ comes (ch. 3: 20).	Vision of a Door Opened in Heaven. Chs. 4 and 5. ——— MESSAGE. ——— Opening of the Seven Seals and the Sounding of the Seven Trumpets. Chs. 6:1-11:18. Christ comes (ch. 11: 15). Conclusion (ch. 20:7- 22:5). Epilogue (ch. 22:6-20).	Vision of the Open Temple in Heaven. Ch. 11:19. ——— MESSAGE. ——— The Woman and the Dragon. History of the Beasts. Pouring out of Seven Vials of Wrath. Chs. 12:1-20:6. Christ comes (ch. 19: 11-20:5).



# Part I.



## CHAPTER II.

### VISION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

Inscription:

Rev. 1: 1-3

REVERENTLY do we read the opening words of the book that closes the canon of the sacred Scripture, and with a prayer to the Giver of all wisdom that he will guide us into all the truth he wishes us to know. A solemnity attaches to our study as we realize that this is the last message which God will vouchsafe to a lost and ruined world until Jesus comes again. It must fill up and complete what was lacking to make the "man of God complete." We have always been told that the Apocalypse was a dark mystery forbidding solution even by the most scholarly minds, but the very first phrase of the inscription contradicts our misapprehension and inspires confidence in our ability to understand the message that is written. If the book is sealed and its mysteries can not be penetrated, the title, as given in the first phrase of the inscription, is a misnomer and is false. The word "revelation" means that which is disclosed, uncovered or made plain. To say that in this book God has not made plain the facts that are given is but to attribute misrepresentation to the Holy Spirit, and to impute lack of wisdom in him who

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

redeemed us in sending a message unto "his servants" which would be incomprehensible to them.

There is no portion of the Scripture but what is of value to the class of people for whom it was intended. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." The revelation of Jesus Christ was given unto him to "show unto his servants." It will be especially profitable unto every disciple of his. It is a rich and a sublime message accorded only to the followers of Christ. The privileges of discipleship are emphasized here as they are in Luke 8:10, where Jesus said: "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to the rest in parables; that seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand." Not only do the children of God have a right to know the truths hidden in the veiled language and the prophetic symbolism of Revelation, but we are encouraged to scan its pages, with a desire to know the things written therein, by the promise of a divine blessing. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein: for the time is at hand" (v. 3). The servant of Christ will be blessed every time he reads the book, and ministers should preach frequently upon the mighty themes suggested therein, for those who hear are to be blessed. Every word of the inscription, therefore, clearly implies that the message that follows can be understood.

## VISION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

---

The key to the understanding of Revelation is given in the inscription, and in the very first verse: "And he sent and *signified* it." The word "signified" means made in signs or symbols. Thus the character of the language used in the book is explicitly stated. We can not interpret its statements in literal terms, for the revelation was "sign-i-fied," but this fact renders it no less intelligible. It becomes but a matter of determining the ordinary prophetic usage of the sign or symbol given in order to understand its true meaning. It matters little whether a word is used literally or figuratively so long as we know certainly in which manner it is to be understood. The inscription definitely fixes the character of the language of the Apocalypse so that we may make no mistake.

Many religious people have been deluded into believing that Christ came to earth a second time. as was so often foretold by himself and other Scripture writers, when John received these visions. They would not have fallen into this error had they examined the careful, comprehensive language of the first verse of the book. Jesus did not come to earth at all. His second coming is still in the future, and we anxiously await his coming "with all of his holy angels with him." The language distinctly declares that Jesus "sent and signified this revelation by his angel unto his servant John." The heavenly being who came unto John was an angel "sent" by Christ.

The scope and character of the message are as clearly and explicitly stated. The revelation of

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

Jesus Christ consists of "things which must shortly come to pass." The date of the vision is approximately 96 A. D. The things foretold will begin to come to pass shortly after that time. This beginning time-limit is unchangeably fixed. The entire subject-matter of the book is concerning things which were then still in the future. The events which have been fulfilled since that time are matters of historic record. A reference to this record is necessary to any understanding of the book. A few writers have overworked the word "shortly," giving a meaning unwarranted by Scripture usage. According to their interpretation, all of the events foretold would occur in a very brief space of time after 96 A. D., and therefore are of no particular interest to this generation. A reference to ch. 22:20 will show that such an interpretation is unjustifiable. There the coming of Jesus is to be "quickly." The faithful still wait for the fulfillment of the promise. If we were to say that we would build a castle "shortly," our meaning would not be misunderstood. Every one would understand that we would begin the construction soon, with no reference to the time of completion except the implication that the work would continue from day to day and that the time of completion would depend upon the size of the structure and the circumstances connected with the building. This is the true meaning of the word "shortly" in this place. "The things which must shortly come to pass" are the movement of armies, the conflicts between nations, the decadence and fall of kingdoms and the development of apostasy.



## VISION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

---

Many of the events described require centuries for their fulfillment, and very naturally could not come within the compass of a few years. The events begin to come to pass "shortly" after 96 A. D., and continue in succession until all are fulfilled in the new heaven and the new earth. In verse 19 John records the prophetic commission in these words: "Write therefore the things which thou sawest [the vision of the seven golden candlesticks], and the things which are [the circumstances surrounding the giving of the vision], and the things which shall come to pass hereafter [future visions and messages]." A comparison of this verse with the first verse will make plain that the beatific vision does not refer to the things "which must come to pass." It belongs to "the things that are," and the message that follows belongs to the "things hereafter."

### Salutation and

### Dedication:

Rev. 1: 4-8

The Apocalypse is addressed to the seven churches whose names are given, and they become its custodians. Here for the first time we find the number "seven" which is used so frequently throughout the book. It signifies completeness or perfection. When the Lord addresses these seven churches, they represent the universal church in its seven-fold character. The divine authenticity of the message is especially emphasized in the inscription and in the salutation. God gave the revelation to Christ. He in turn sent his angel who "signified" it to John. The salutation has a threefold divine signature: 1. The Father himself, indicated in the expression, "him who is and who

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

was and who is to come." 2. The "seven Spirits that are before his throne." This indicates the Holy Spirit in his seven-fold manifestation. Six of these basic forms or manifestations are mentioned in Isa. 11:2. In Rev. 4:5 the seven Spirits of God are described as "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne." In Rev. 5:6 the seven Spirits are described as "seven eyes." In Zech. 4:10 they are referred to as "the eyes of Jehovah which run to and fro through the whole earth." Further than this we would not attempt to intrude into the mysteries of divinity. 3. Lastly, from Jesus Christ. All of these join together in a salutation of grace and peace to the church universal through the seven churches. While storm and struggle and strife may engulf the church, the infinite care and love of the everlasting God, whose "seven eyes run to and fro throughout the earth," will not fail, nor will the threefold function of Christ cease. His office in its triplex nature is explicitly stated. 1. He is "the faithful witness." Faithfully does he reveal the will of God concerning man. He is our Prophet and Teacher. 2. He is "the firstborn from the dead." He is risen and ascended into heaven and become "our great High Priest." 3. He is "the ruler of the kings of the earth." In this phrase his divine sovereignty is declared, and therefore he is our Lord. John then bursts forth into an ascription of praise to Christ for a threefold work which he has done for his servants. 1. He "loved us." 2. He "loosed us from our sins." 3. He "made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and

## VISION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

Father." This glorious heritage of the children of God is to be realized at "his appearing and his kingdom." Hence it furnishes the opportunity to pass naturally to the announcement of that transcendent theme, the second coming of Christ. "Behold, he cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see him." As the eyes of the aged apostle are permitted to feast upon the glorious beauty of the heavenly world and mystery after mystery is revealed to him in divine symbolism, that one momentous event is that toward which all others are tending. The absolute certainty of his glorious appearing is guaranteed by the nature and character of God. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty" (v. 8). John was writing in the Greek language, and "Alpha" and "Omega" are the first and last letters of the alphabet. Therefore he is the first and last, the all and in all. He is the goal toward which all events are tending. Hence there is absolutely no possibility of failure in the fulfillment of the prophecy just beginning to be announced. Jesus will appear in the clouds as the crowning climax of the mighty struggle that shall take place in the meantime, and "every eye shall see him." At that time the entire human race will be privileged to see in reality the regal form of him whom John saw but in vision.

The first expression of the  
**The Vision:** author as he begins a description  
**Rev. 1: 9-20** of the things which he saw and  
heard is remarkable. No other Scripture writer

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

except Daniel in the Old Testament uses this form. The expressions "I Daniel" and "I John" link the two books together as being of the same nature. The subject-matter of the Book of Revelation will run parallel with that of the Book of Daniel in so far as the prophecies of the latter were unfulfilled at the time. The usages of symbolism will be the same in both books. Striking indeed is the parallel between the circumstances surrounding both writers. Daniel was an exile from his native land in company with the chosen people of God. John is an exile on a lonely isle as well as a "brother and partaker" with the Christians in their tribulations. As Daniel "was fallen into a deep sleep" after that he received the divine visitation, so John fell at the feet of the glorious One that he saw "as one dead."

The circumstances surrounding the appearance of the initial visions are narrated with exactness. Although in the solitude of the island prison-house, the aged exile was denied the fellowship and sympathy of his brethren, yet upon this first day of the week he entered into a more blessed fellowship and experienced a more tender sympathy than was ever known to man before. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." The Catholic Church did not change the day of worship from the seventh day to the first as some of her teachers claim. Constantine did not make the change as some sabbatarians claim. Constantine only legalized the first day of the week by forbidding certain kinds of labor to be performed, just as has been done

## VISION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

by various states. The first day of the week had been observed as a day of religious service from the very beginning of the church on the day of Pentecost. Here, in the year 96 A. D., we find it commonly known and spoken of as "the Lord's day." This day was made memorable by visions of heavenly splendor and by revelations of vital moment far surpassing anything experienced by saint or prophet.

The solitude of the barren rock was broken by "a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, What thou seest, write in a book and send it to the seven churches." Thus the Apocalypse is opened with the sound of a trumpet. The blowing of the trumpet was the signal for the gathering of the congregation (Num. 10:3). In Ex. 19:19 it is the signal for the revelation of the law. Here the "great voice, as of a trumpet," is the signal that the revelation of the panorama of all future human history is about to be given. A preview of these events until the final consummation of all things in the new heavens and new earth was to be recorded in a book. Turning to "see the voice," John gazed upon a vision of divine splendor which held him entranced. Seven golden candlesticks stood in the foreground. This was the first and most prominent feature. In a moment of time the mind reverts back to the ancient tabernacle, wherein the golden candlestick with seven arms was kept burning continually, and to the vision of Zechariah, where a similar candlestick with seven lamps is supplied with oil from two olive-trees

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

(Zech. 4:2, 3). The candlestick in this vision does not stand alone as an article of furniture, as that of the ancient house of God, but immediately the figure of a heavenly being begins to materialize in the midst of them. So appareled in divine splendor was he that the aged apostle "fell at his feet as one dead." He was "like unto a son of man." Daniel describes the same being as a man in Dan. 10:5, 6, but six centuries had intervened between the two visions. It was not the Son of man that John knew as his daily companion, but the transfigured One that he saw on Mt. Hermon. Here, as he stands in the midst of the churches, he is arrayed in the garment of his great High Priesthood, with a golden girdle about his breasts. When Daniel saw him he wore the girdle about his loins, denoting a preparedness for travel or labor. His head and his hair manifested that same divine whiteness as the one who is called the "ancient of days" in Dan. 7:9. His eyes and his feet and his voice are the same as those of the one whom Daniel saw, significant of the overpowering splendor and glory with which he appeared to these two prophets. Now as he stands in the midst of the candlesticks he has in "his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (v. 16). As this glorious being stands in the midst of the candlesticks, arrayed as a high priest, he is equipped for both defense and offense.

The "man" who presented himself to Daniel



## VISION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

---

in beatific vision came to make him understand what should befall his people in the latter days (Dan. 10:14). So this one like unto "a son of man" appears in a similar vision to make John understand what should befall the church in the latter days. As the "man" touched Daniel and caused him to stand on his feet, saying to him, "Fear not, Daniel," so this one like unto "a son of man" laid his right hand—the one containing the seven stars—upon John, saying, "Fear not: I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades. Write the things which thou sawest, and the things which are, and the things which shall come to pass hereafter" (vs. 17-19). No one can fail to comprehend the one who speaks. He claims to possess the characteristic attributes of the Father. He it was who said, "I and my Father are one." No comment could make plainer that the glorious One in the midst of the candlesticks is the visional manifestation of him who was the triumphant victor over the grave. He is the Son of God, who has authority over death and Hades.

**Mystery Revealed: v. 20** We need no aid of scholarship to understand the meaning of the mystery involved in this vision. The glorious One himself reveals the meaning of it. Our minds revert to the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, where an interpretation of the first two parables is given as a guide to our interpretation of those that follow. So here he gives

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

an interpretation of the first apocalyptic vision to guide us in our understanding of those that follow. When the divine interpreter utters the words, "the mystery of the seven stars and the seven golden candlesticks," he makes us to understand that Revelation is the unfolding of their mystery. We also understand that we are not dealing with language used in its literal sense. He shows us that symbolism is intelligible and may be translated into language which we may understand literally. We find that the stars in the vision are not to be understood as stars that shine so resplendently in the sky upon a clear night, but they are "angels of the seven churches." The seven candlesticks are not to be understood as seven articles made of gold, for they "are the seven churches." We have now the divine rule laid down for us as we strive to understand the remaining mysteries given in the book. What divine truths stand out before us as we understand the significance of the candlesticks. The church is as a candlestick. It is a light-bearer. It burns continually. The great High Priest, with the sharp two-edged sword in his mouth, is in the midst of the churches. While the candlesticks were the first visible features, it was at the appearance of the glorious One that the apostle fell to the ground. It is only when the Christ is manifest in the church to-day that men will be overawed and fall prostrate at his feet.

Christ did not translate the symbolism of the seven stars into literal terms, but gave its meaning in a figurative expression that would be easily

## VISION OF THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS

---

understood by the apostle John. The term "angels" does not imply that these are heavenly beings, for in chapters 2 and 3 we have the letters to the churches addressed to the "angels." The heavenly angels are message-bearers from God to men, but these "angels" are connected with the churches. A Scripture definition of angel is: "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" They are the servants and ministers of the churches. The apostle John was lower than the heavenly angels. It would be contrary to reason and nature that he should write letters to them. The inscription tells us that this revelation was to be shown unto "his servants," and when John writes to the "angel" of the church he is addressing a servant of Christ. The term "star" gives us an indication of the characteristics of these "angels" or servants. A star is a conspicuous object in the firmament. These angels are, then, conspicuous figures in the churches. The conspicuousness of a star is due to its light-giving nature. These ministers or servants of the churches are men who, "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life" (Phil. 2:15, 16). Jesus himself is called the Morning Star. A solemn thought comes to us as we behold these conspicuous men being held in the right hand of him who is in the midst of the candlesticks. They are in his power. He is able to crush the most brilliant as well as able to protect and sustain the weakest and humblest minister

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

under all circumstances. Lord Jesus, make us to know that we are in thy hand at all times of stress and trial, and that thou wilt sustain us in all adversity. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy."

## CHAPTER III.

### LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

OUT of the many churches in existence in 96 A. D., seven were chosen to be the recipients of the book that John was commissioned to write. "What thou seest, write in a book and send it unto the seven churches: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamum, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea" (ch. 1:11).

Ephesus was the scene of the labors of the apostle in his declining years, and was the political as well as the religious metropolis of proconsular Asia. It was also the seat of the worship of Diana, the goddess of the Ephesians. Smyrna was situated on the Ægean Sea, north of Ephesus, and was a flourishing center of commerce under the Romans. It was the reputed birthplace of Homer. Pergamum was situated in Mysia, and was the most northerly of the seven cities named. It was a city of temples—Athene, Apollo, Aphrodite, Dionysius and Zeus being worshiped. It possessed a famous library of two hundred thousand volumes, which was founded 197-195 B. C. Thyatira was situated southeast of Pergamum and north of Sardis. It was the home of Lydia, Paul's first convert in Europe. Its inhab-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

itants were composed of peoples of many races. Sardis, the ancient capital of Lydia, was situated south of Thyatira and about three days' journey east of Ephesus. Sardis was the residence of Cræsus, and, in the olden time, was noted for its riches and luxury. Philadelphia was also situated in Lydia and was southeast of Sardis. It was founded in 138 B. C. Many times it suffered greatly from earthquakes, and in 17 A. D. was almost wholly destroyed. Laodicea was situated in Phrygia and not far from Colosse. It was an important commercial center in the interior. It was laid in ruins by an earthquake in 63 A. D., but it was soon restored.

The local conditions in these seven churches named may have been such as are described in the letters addressed to them, but we do not pause to speculate in regard to the matter. The letters themselves show that they are not to be understood as applying only to the conditions in the church addressed. Near the close of each Epistle is an exhortation which clearly indicates that its message, while addressed to the angel of a particular church, is of larger application. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." According to this exhortation, the message to any one church is for the "churches." The expression, "He that hath an ear, let him hear," indicates that the letter to a particular church is as a message to the universal Christian intelligence and therefore a revelation to the universal church. The seven letters taken together form one continuous



## LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

---

revelation of the church from 96 A. D. to the second coming of Christ.

The glorious vision that introduces these letters indicates that they are concerning the church universal rather than seven local congregations. The vision of the seven candlesticks which are interpreted to mean the seven churches is a united whole. The appearance of one "like unto a son of man," holding the seven stars in one hand and standing in the midst of the candlesticks, determines the fact of the underlying unity in a seven-fold form. Each candlestick represents a division or period in the moral and spiritual history of the universal church. These periods begin with the conditions that prevailed in the church at large in the year 96 A. D., and follow each other in succession until "Christ stands at the door and knocks." We remember that the revelation was "sign-i-fied" by the angel to his "servant John." Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, etc., are but signs or symbols of the church in its seven-fold development, harmonizing with the structure of the second and third parts of the book. As the creative period of the earth is divided into seven parts, so in the genesis of the church we find the septiform division. While, from the very nature of things, no accurate date can be given for the ending of one period and the beginning of the next, yet details are furnished in each letter sufficient to enable us to locate each division in a general way. The outstanding characteristics of each successive historical period determine the approximate limits of its duration.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

**Ephesus:**

**Rev. 2:1-7**

In common with the other letters, this one has a definite plan. 1. It is addressed to the angel of the church. 2. It is introduced by a salutation of the one whom John saw in the vision and ascribing to him some of the divine characteristics mentioned in his description. 3. An address giving the conditions of the church and giving such warning or praise as those conditions demand. 4. Announcement of what will come to pass in the future. 5. A promise to him that overcometh. 6. An exhortation to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. In each letter the address to the church is introduced by the same expression, "I know." In five of them it is, "I know thy works;" in one it is, "I know thy tribulations," and in the other it is, "I know where thou dwellest." In every case the fact of the absolute knowledge of the speaker is the first truth revealed. Nothing is hid from the understanding and knowledge of the Christ, even to the minutest detail. All things are open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. We have, therefore, the absolute assurance that the development or retrogression of the spiritual life of the church will be foretold with as much accuracy as if it were already a matter of history.

While the conditions in the local congregation may have been, and most likely were, those described in the letter to Ephesus, yet this manner of address is symbolical and applies to the first period of Christianity, beginning with the year 96 A. D. The evidences of this are found in the letter itself.

## LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

---

About thirty years had passed by since the death of Paul and the other apostles when John received this revelation. About twenty-six years had elapsed since the destruction of Jerusalem, and during this period the residence of John was at Ephesus. Naturally, after the apostles were gone impostors would arise pretending to have apostolic power and authority. Paul warned the elders of the church of Ephesus in these words: "I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20: 29, 30). It would be difficult, however, for an impostor to successfully impose his pretensions upon the congregation while the apostle John was present with it. It would seem that Ephesus would be the very last place that an impostor would come until after John's death. The spirit of apostasy indicated in the statement, "Thou didst leave thy first love," and which was prevalent throughout the entire church, had its incipency about the time of the death of the apostles. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, said: "The mystery of lawlessness doth already work" (2 Thess. 2:7). He warns Timothy about the troublous conditions that should arise (2 Tim. 3:1-8). Peter, also, warns the Christians, to whom he addressed his second letter, of the false teachers that should arise (2 Pet. 2). Jude devotes his Epistle to the same subject. It would seem, therefore, that these conditions would be more likely to prevail to a greater degree in the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

church at large than in the one congregation that enjoyed the presence of the one remaining apostle. In the thirty years that passed by since the death of most of the miraculously endowed men, sufficient time has elapsed for false apostles to arise and their imposture to be made manifest. These conditions prevail until possibly 193 A. D., or the opening of the second seal.

It was during this period that the religious system known as Gnosticism attained its greatest influence. The nature of it is indicated by Milman:

“Cerinthus was the first, of whose tenets we have any distinct statement, who, admitting the truth of Christianity, attempted to incorporate with it foreign and Oriental tenets. His system was a singular and apparently incongruous fusion of Jewish, Christian and Oriental notions. He did not, like Simon or Menander, invest himself in a sacred and mysterious character, though he *pretended to angelic revelations.*”  
—*History of Christianity*, Vol. II., p. 59.

Gnosticism spread throughout Christendom and was most popular about 140-150 A. D. Among the most renowned of these teachers were Cerinthus, Tatian and Marcion. The Nicolaitans were a sect having an immoral form of worship originating with Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, and who, tradition says, was guilty of apostasy from the faith. The Ephesian period is that in which Gnosticism attained its greatest prominence (96-193 A. D.).

This period of the history of Christianity is marked by extreme tribulation. It is introduced by the expression: “I know thy tribulation.” Then it

Smyrna:  
Rev. 2: 8-11

## LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

---

closes with the promise of tribulation for "ten days." The period indicated by these expressions is 166-313 A. D. It began with the persecution under Marcus Aurelius in the year 166 A. D. It was during this persecution that Justin Martyr and Polycarp suffered martyrdom. Following this, there were six periods of persecution: the one under Septimus, 202-211 A. D.; under Maximian, 235-238 A. D.; under Decius, 250-253 A. D.; under Valerian, 257-260 A. D.; under Aurelian, 275 A. D., and under Diocletian, 303-313 A. D.

The first statement of the letter describes the church as emerging from a bitter and universal persecution in which many of her godly leaders suffered martyrdom. The last statement describes the persecution with which the Smyrna period would close. This was to last "ten days." The question at once arises, Are these literal days of twenty-four hours each, or do they represent longer periods of time? The question must be answered by the Scripture itself. It is true that in some of the prophecies of the Scripture we find the time limit of the prediction plainly given as in the seventy years of the Jewish captivity, but the prophecies of Daniel and John do not belong in the same class with those of Jeremiah. Daniel and John did not see the events of the future, but they saw the symbols of these events. They saw all of the epoch-making events marshaled together in the small compass of a few visions. Sometimes the history of centuries was symbolized in the vision concerning one beast, the rise and fall of a mighty kingdom

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

portrayed in one horn. When a geographer wishes to draw a map of a continent upon a sheet of paper, he is compelled to reduce all measurements proportionately. The architect does precisely the same thing when he draws the plan of a large building. Each draws to scale. One may use an eighth of an inch to represent a hundred miles, while the other may use it to represent one foot. There is no difficulty in understanding the measurements of the continent or of the building if we understand the scale used in each drawing. In both of these prophecies we find many centuries of history brought together in small compass. We know, then, that "a day" represents a much larger period of time, and the only problem we have is to determine the scale to which this chart of prophetic history is drawn. One scale is given in 2 Pet. 3:8: "But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Here a day is equal to a thousand years, but this scale is to apply to the day of judgment mentioned in the preceding verse. Another scale is given in Num. 14:34: "After the number of days in which ye spied out the land, even forty days, for every day a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years." Again, Ezekiel is given the same scale of a day for a year: "Forty days, each day for a year, have I appointed it unto thee" (Ezek. 4:6). The same declaration is made in verse 5. What scale do John and Daniel use? Fortunately, Daniel gives us the answer to our question. In the ninth chapter



## LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

---

of Daniel we have a definite prophecy concerning the Messiah: "Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks" (Dan. 9:25). The total of this is sixty-nine weeks, or 483 days. The date of the issuance of this decree was 457 B. C. The date of the beginning of the ministry of Jesus was the latter part of the year 26 A. D. The length of time intervening was 483 years, and Daniel in his prophecy says it is 483 days. Therefore the time scale which Daniel uses is a day for a year. John uses the same time limits as Daniel, as can be seen by a comparison of the two books.

The ten days of tribulation referred to in the Smyrna period mean ten years, and were fulfilled by the persecution which began under Diocletian in 303 A. D. and continued until 313 A. D. Milman says concerning the extent of this persecution:

"In almost every part of the world, Christianity found itself at once assailed by the full force of the civil power, constantly goaded on by the united influence of the pagan priesthood and the philosophic party. . . . Edict followed edict, rising in regular gradations of angry barbarity. The whole clergy were declared enemies of the state; they were seized wherever a hostile prefect chose to put forth his boundless authority; and bishops, presbyters and deacons were crowded into prisons intended for the basest malefactors."—*History of Christianity*, Vol. II., p. 225.

This period closes with Licinius' "Edict of

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

Toleration," issued Jan. 13, 313 A. D. How much those early Christians needed the comforting promise of the Master: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

In the letter to the "angel of Pergamum: the church in Pergamum" we have indications of a tendency far more dangerous to the pure faith of the gospel than the bitter persecutions of Diocletian and his successors. "I know where thou dwellest, even where Satan's throne is" (v. 13). The evil influence can not but seriously affect the church that is in close proximity to the seat of Satan's power and authority. In the twelfth chapter there is a description of a great red dragon that seeks to destroy the man child, and, failing in this, persecutes the church, symbolized by the woman and her seed. In Rev. 20:2 this dragon is identified as Satan. Now, the power that persecuted the woman and her seed was the pagan Roman Empire, and its seat or capital was Rome. The period of church history described by this letter is that when Christianity came into intimate relationship with the civil government of Rome, beginning about 313 A. D. A quotation from Milman's "History of Christianity" shows the relationship that appeared when Constantine won control. He says:

"The Roman religion sank with the Roman supremacy. The new empire welcomed the new religion as its ally and associate in the government of the human mind. The empire lent its countenance, its sanction, at length its power, to Christianity."—Vol. II., p. 249.

## LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

---

Coming in close contact with the power of the Roman state, and entering into friendly relations with it, apostasy begins to develop rapidly. The development of the bishopric, which had its beginning at about the end of the second century, was now accelerated. Hierarchical pretensions were on the increase. The influence of the bishop of the church in Rome was being more firmly established. It was not to be wondered that during this period there were some "that hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication." Arianism had its rise about 317 A. D. The Council of Nice, summoned not by the church, but by the Roman emperor, assembled 325 A. D., and promulgated the Nicæan Creed. The Council of Tyre, assembled in 335 A. D., and the Council of Constantinople, 336 A. D., resulted in the division of Christendom. During the reign of Constantius (337-361 A. D.) one-half of the inhabitants of the Roman Empire profess Christianity, and it is established as the religion of state. During this period Mani attempted to unite the conflicting elements of the Oriental religions with Christianity. It is not strange that when Christianity succeeded to the throne of the Cæsars, there should also come a laxity of morals, and that there should be "some that hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans." The general tendencies of this period until 476 A. D., which marks the downfall of the western Roman Empire, were away from the simplicity and purity of the Christian life.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

**Thyatira:**  
**Rev. 2: 18-29**

The tendencies to apostasy from the true and simple faith of Christ were accelerated by the successive invasions of the Goths (410 A. D.), the Vandals (422 A. D.), the Huns (451 A. D.), and by the final overthrow of Rome by Odoacer in 476 A. D. It is natural that the religion of the conquerors would leave its impress upon the religion of the conquered. Also, during the last period, the influence of the church at Rome had gradually increased. Innocent I., bishop of Rome, required all western churches to conform to the church of Rome (416 A. D.). Valentinian III. decreed that all bishops of the western empire obey the bishop of Rome (425 A. D.). The time is now ripe for the development of the harlot church. The outstanding statements of this letter are warnings concerning a woman. Following the division of the kingdom of David into the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, the name of Jezebel became a synonym of everything that was wicked. Now that Christendom has become divided into the eastern and western churches since 336 A. D., no more fitting symbol of the apostasy that is developing could be found than the wicked queen of Ahab, and she corresponds to the harlot described in Revelation 17, as "sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast." The description given in this letter is so plain that none could mistake the purpose of it to describe that period of religious history when the Papacy was in the ascendancy, beginning with 476 A. D. and continuing until the Reformation of Martin Luther.

## LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

---

### **Sardis:**

**Rev. 3: 1-6**

During the dark days of the last period the true church was "nourished in the wilderness" (Rev. 12:14), while the Pope boldly claimed to be the vicar of Christ and the Papal system masqueraded as the "holy church." Those who still clung to a semblance of the primitive faith and refused to yield to the blandishments of Jezebel were hidden away from the view of the world as were their compatriots in the days of Ahab. The time has now dawned when the power of Papal Rome will be assailed and many shall be released from their spiritual bondage to her. Martin Luther and the contemporary reformers found Christianity in the condition described by the letter. "Thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead." The voice of Luther and others was heard by multiplied thousands, and the letter enjoins them: "Remember therefore how thou hast received and didst hear; and keep it and repent." This period includes the great movements of Calvin and Wesley. The purpose of these men of God was to reform the then existing religious institutions. The approximate time limits of this period of religious history are 1520 A. D. to 1793 A. D.

### **Philadelphia:**

**Rev. 3: 7-13**

Late in the eighteenth century a new religious movement began to crystallize and take form. Its underlying causes may be traced back to the Renaissance. A great wave of infidelity had swept over the world; the Protestant church was divided into warring sects. Christianity was almost at a stand-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

still. Good men in many of the sects saw that something was vitally wrong, and, independently of each other, began to seek for the remedy. As they opened their New Testaments they found that division in the family of God was contrary to the will of Christ. They found that the evangelization of the world depended upon the unity of Christendom, for Christ prayed that "they all may be one that the world may believe." They found that the primitive church, built by Christ and his apostles, was a united church and a church of power. All of these investigators came to the same conclusion, that the remedy for the evil conditions of the time was to restore the church of Christ in doctrine and practice. So, discarding all human traditions and creeds and taking the New Testament alone as the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, they began to preach the gospel as it was first promulgated. On Christmas Day, 1793, at Manakin Town, North Carolina, James O'Kelly, of the Methodist Church, instituted a congregation patterned after the New Testament church. The members were called Christians as they were at Antioch. It was not long until congregations in different parts of the country were instituted. During the years 1800-1803, Dr. Abner Jones, of the Baptist Church, tiring of the evil conditions of the time, established congregations of Christians at Lyndon, Vermont, and Bradford and Pierpoint, New Hampshire. Barton W. Stone, of the Presbyterian Church, led a great movement of the same nature in Kentucky, and his followers were likewise called Christians. These were all



## LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES

---

crystallized into one great movement to restore the primitive faith and practice of the New Testament church under the leadership of Thomas and Alexander Campbell. Their epoch-making religious document, known as "The Declaration and Address," was issued in 1809. The preachers of this movement exalt the Bible and insist upon the authority of the New Testament. They refuse to wear any name except the name of Christ. This letter to the church in Philadelphia describes the movement in these words: "Thou didst keep my word, and didst not deny my name" (Rev. 3:8). Many different kinds of religious bodies exist, each professing to be "Jews"; that is, the chosen people of God. The warning of this letter is that they are not, but rather belong to the "synagogue of Satan." To all of those who conscientiously strive to conform to the teaching of the New Testament this precious promise is given: "Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try the faith of them who dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10). How firmly the hosts of the Restoration movement should cling to the old paths. The time will not be long when the promise given will be realized, for the announcement is made: "Behold, I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11). The end of this period, then, will not be until the second coming of Christ, because the faithful are to be kept through "the hour of trial" immediately preceding that event (v. 10).

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

**Laodicea:** This letter needs very little  
**Rev. 3: 14-22** comment. Any close observer of religious conditions in general at the present time will not fail to understand that the letter to the church in Laodicea applies to the state of Christianity of our own time. Men are puffed up. Culture is the goddess at whose feet thousands of congregations worship. Professed followers of Christ are neither "cold nor hot." The "power of God" is no longer relied upon, but the questionable methods of union evangelists are resorted to for the spasmodic awakening of people. While the barriers between denominations are being broken down, they are not being builded together on the New Testament foundation. The important thing to notice in the description is that Jesus is at the door. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock" (Rev. 3:20). The branches of the fig-tree are even now putting forth its leaves, so we know that Christ "is nigh, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33). The conditions of the present time will end with the coming of our Lord to judge the house of God.

## Part II.



## CHAPTER IV.

### A VISION OF HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

AS the last word is spoken to the church at Laodicea, the seven golden candlesticks, with the glorious One walking in the midst of them, begin to dissolve. Patmos again becomes the lonely place of exile. No sound disturbs the solitude of the barren isle save the moaning of the sea or the roar of the waves as they beat upon its rocky shore. But it was not for long that the aged prophet would be left alone in his meditation upon the vision he had already been privileged to behold. Another and a more entrancing vision would burst upon his eyes "after this." A fuller and clearer revelation would be granted him.

The events revealed in the second part of Revelation will be different in their character from those unfolded in the first part, because the scene has changed. The setting of the vision is no longer the solitude of his island prison, but the gates of heaven have swung ajar and John's enraptured eyes are privileged to gaze upon scenes of heavenly splendor and glory. He saw the very throne of God emblazoned with splendor divine. He saw that great host of heavenly beings, and heard the angelic

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

choir hymning its pæans of praise to Him "who is, and who is to come."

The throne is the seat of the king—the place where authority is exercised and where laws are promulgated. From the throne emanates the edicts that concern the states or provinces over which the king has power. The King who sits upon this throne which John saw is the ruler over the kingdoms of this world, for he is King of kings. This vision, therefore, will have to do with the various kingdoms of the world. It will have to do with governments and laws. It will have to do with the marching of armies and the mighty struggles between the nations of men under his providential control until all of these kingdoms have been brought into subjection to Christ in the everlasting kingdom. As symbol after symbol is given, we know they all have to do with the rise and fall of kingdoms and empires, and especially with the divine judgments which are providentially administered by various human agencies controlled by Him who sits upon the throne, until the race respects his righteous laws and yields to his will.

The subject-matter of this part of Revelation will consist of the prediction of epoch-making events connected with the nations and governments of men until "the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15). All of the panorama of human history from 96 A. D. to the second coming of Christ sweeps before the eyes of the enraptured seer, for these are "things which must come to pass hereafter" (Rev. 4:1).



## HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

---

These events are "sign-i-fied," or recorded in symbolic language. They are matters of history, and therefore capable of historical verification. If the pages of history record the fulfillment of the events as predicted by John, then there can be no question about the Bible being God's book. Part II. begins at Rev. 4:1 and ends with Rev. 11:18. Chapters 4 and 5 contain a description of the things which John saw in his vision, and are introductory to the message revealed beginning with Rev. 6:1.

**The Vision** In point of time this vision follows that of the golden candlesticks. "After these things I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven" (Rev. 4:1). This vision is introduced with a "voice as of a trumpet," exactly as was the first vision. It was the same voice. It was the same angel of Christ. No change had been made in the means of divine communication. In the visions of Daniel in the Old Testament it was the same angel that came to him each time to "give him understanding." The place of this vision is different from that of the first. The lowlands of earth are not calculated to permit us to see afar off or to see clearly. Our horizon is narrowed by human limitations. John now is invited to "come up hither," where from the highlands of Zion he might behold that mighty panorama of future events from the divine viewpoint and with eternity only as his horizon. With unobstructed view the vista of the future spreads out before him, and the angel points to the significant struggles that take place. "I will show thee the things which must

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

come to pass hereafter." No sooner had the invitation been given than the enabling power was granted, and "straightway John was in the Spirit." Heaven was visualized. John gives a careful description of the scene in these words:

"There was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting upon the throne; and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper stone and a sardius: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, like an emerald to look upon" (Rev. 4: 2, 3).

The throne was the first and most prominent object in the vision, because it indicates the divinely regal character of him that occupied it. The heavenly throne is the seat of heaven's King. The description that follows is of the occupant of the throne. Human language is too weak to convey an idea of the brightness of the transcendent glory that enwrapped the one that John gazed upon. The gorgeous hues of the rainbow, and of varicolored jewels with their brilliant and sparkling sheen, can only indicate in a measure the dazzling brightness of the glory of Him who sat upon the throne. At the time that Ezekiel received his prophetic commission he was privileged to behold a similar vision.

"And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was a likeness as the appearance of a man upon it above. And I saw as it were glowing metal, as the appearance of fire within it round about, from the appearance of his loins and upward; and from the appearance of his loins and downward I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness round about him. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud

## HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

---

in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah" (Ezek. 1:26-28).

Ezekiel here indicates that he is striving to find language to convey some idea of the beauty of the vision which he beheld. He also plainly indicates that the objects in the vision were not literal, but were symbols. The throne was a likeness, and the one who sat upon the throne was a likeness. Daniel was privileged to have a similar vision, which he describes in these words:

"I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire" (Dan. 7:9).

Here the color and brightness of fire, as well as the whiteness of snow, represents the appearance of the glory of the Ancient of days. The apostle now passes on to a description of other heavenly objects that present themselves to his view.

"And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones: and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting, arrayed in white garments; and on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and before the throne, as it were a sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature was like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, having each one of them six wings, are full

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

of eyes round about and within: and they have no rest day and night, saying,

“Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come” (Rev. 4:4-8).

### The Elders

Next succeeding the glorious vision of God there is the appearance of the heavenly attendants. Encircling the throne of the Almighty are four and twenty thrones, and the beings who sit upon them are described as elders. The fact that they sit upon heavenly thrones indicates that they are invested with divine authority and power. The fact that they wear crowns indicates that they are exercising kingly functions in the divine government. What the scope of their authority is, is not given. We find that when the living creatures worship God, the elders fall down before the throne, casting their crowns before him, and join in their ascription of praise (Rev. 4:9-11). In Rev. 5:8, 9, when the living creatures and the elders join in their worship and adoration of the Lamb, each has a harp and “golden bowls of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.” They are connected in some way with bringing the petitions of the saints in the presence of God. In Rev. 5:11 they join with all of the angelic beings in a mighty pæan of praise, at the conclusion of which the living creatures say “Amen,” and the elders fall down and worship (Rev. 5:14). In Rev. 7:9-12 we find the elders again worshipping, following the triumphant song of the multitude of the redeemed. In Rev. 7:13-17 we find one of these elders giving John some information as to

## HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

---

who this multitude was, the reason for their being there, their duties and the blessings which they will enjoy. Again, when the seventh trumpet sounds we find the elders again worshipping God. From these Scriptures we understand that these are divine beings in the most intimate association with the Almighty in his counsels and his government. Their functions are connected with the worship and adoration of God and of Christ, and with the prayers of the saints. This immediately suggests the services in the Jewish temple, which was designed to be "a pattern of heavenly things." The priesthood was divided into twenty-four courses, and each served in the temple of God in order. At the head of each course was one who bore the title of chief priest. In 1 Chron. 24:5 they are called "princes of the sanctuary, and princes of God." These are typical of those heavenly beings whom John saw. Hence the elders of the vision are twenty-four princes of God who are over spiritual Israel. In Rev. 21:10-14 we have a description of redeemed spiritual Israel under the figure the "holy city Jerusalem." There are twelve gates and twelve foundations. Upon the gates were written "the names of the twelve tribes," and upon the foundations were written "the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Thus we have again the twenty-four-fold division in spiritual Israel, twelve divisions being represented by the leaders of the twelve tribes of the Jewish dispensation and twelve divisions represented by the twelve apostles of the Christian dispensation. Thus each dispensation has equal

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

representation in the divine government. Further than this the Scripture does not reveal the functions of the elders, and we wait until we stand in their presence for a fuller understanding of these princes of God.

Again our attention is called to the central throne. There proceed out of it "lightnings and voices and thunders." These violent visible and auricular demonstrations manifest the majesty of the presence of God and the omnipotence of his power. "But the thunder of his power who can understand?" (Job 26:14). Thunder proceeds from and is a resultant of his power. These demonstrations accompanied the presence of Jehovah upon Mt. Sinai in connection with the giving of the law. They struck terror to the people, but Moses reminded them that they need not fear (Ex. 20:18-20). David uses thunder as a figure of the voice of God (Ps. 29:3). When the prayer of Jesus in the temple was answered, the people said that "it thundered." John the Baptist is called "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," announcing the coming of Christ. Lightning dispels the darkness momentarily with its unusual brilliancy, and is also an instrument of destruction. These terms, therefore, very fittingly symbolize the majesty and power of God, and also indicate a revelation of his will or an execution of his judgment upon his enemies. These demonstrations occur three more times in the Book of Revelation. Once before the trumpet angels begin to sound (Rev. 8:5), once when John saw the vision of the temple opened in



## HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

---

heaven (Rev. 11:19), and again following the pouring out of the seventh bowl of wrath (Rev. 16:18).

Standing just before the central throne are seen seven lamps of fire burning, and these are said to represent the seven Spirits of God. These are mentioned next in order because it is through the agency and operation of the Holy Spirit that the revelation indicated by the lightnings and voices and thunders is to be made. Further than this we would not attempt to lift the veil of mystery that enwraps Divinity. Also before the throne is, as it were, "a sea of glass like unto crystal." Rev. 17:15 gives the meaning of "sea" as a symbol. "The waters which thou sawest, where the harlot sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." The sea, which is a large body of water, represents all of humanity. Crystal denotes transparency. All things are open and transparent before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do, even the secret thoughts and intents of the heart. All of the struggles and vicissitudes that shall be experienced by humanity until eternity shall dawn are clearly seen by Him who sits upon the throne. Its great underlying movements are apparent to Him, for he looks into the depths of humanity as one would look into a crystal sea.

**The Living  
Creatures**                      Next in order there appear four living creatures. They are described as being "in the midst of the throne and round about the throne." This would indicate that they sustained the closest rela-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

tionship with the functions of divine government as represented by the throne. They are all-seeing, and their wings indicate that they are creatures of motion. This also is shown by the fact that they "have no rest day and night" in ascribing praise to the Almighty. They are always associated with the elders in their service. When Ezekiel received his call to the prophetic office, he saw the same living creatures (Ezek. 1:5-25). In the tenth chapter of Ezekiel these same living creatures are described, and are denominated "cherubim." "This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river Chebar; and I knew that they were cherubim" (Ezek. 10:20). This prophet clearly indicates that the cherubim are closely associated with God when he speaks. "And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard, . . . as the voice of God Almighty when he speaketh" (Ezek. 10:5). Isaiah, also, was privileged to see these same living creatures at the time he received his prophetic commission. The glorious scene is described in the sixth chapter of his prophecy. He calls them seraphim. One of these seraphim performs the function of a messenger of God to reveal the commission to the prophet, and by means of the coal of fire to cleanse him and fit him for his work. Thus the Scriptures clearly indicate that the living creatures of John's vision are heavenly beings who serve as swift-flying messengers to men with the revelation of God's will, and that the sound of their wings is "as the voice of God Almighty." Very fittingly do they appear to John as the grand pano-

## HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

---

rama of the future is about to be unfolded. Cherubim were stationed at the gates of Eden as warders. Figures of cherubim were placed over the mercy-seat in the tabernacle, and between these was the presence or the glory of God.

### Vision of the Book

When Jesus was upon earth sixty-six years before the date of this vision, he said to his disciples: "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matt. 24:36). On the day of his ascension he uttered in substance the same thing, saying: "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority" (Acts 1:7). Many unthinking people quote these statements of the Master as if they were to be eternally true. To interpret them in this way would be to limit the Father so that he could not make known the times or the seasons at such times as he saw fit, a thing which Jesus never did. What Jesus meant was that the day and the hour had not been revealed either to him or the angels in heaven at the time that he spoke. He did not say that God would never reveal these things, but, on the other hand, he plainly says that this knowledge is "within his own authority." After more than threescore years pass by, the aged exile of Patmos sees the great sealed book of the future in the right hand of Jehovah as he sits upon his awful throne and surrounded by an innumerable host of heavenly beings. This book was written, as were the books of John's day, in the form of a roll. It had seven seals. In other words, its con-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

tents were completely sealed or hidden from the knowledge of every being in the universe save him who held it in his right hand. This is exactly what Jesus said sixty-six years before: "No one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." This roll was composed of seven leaves following each other successively, and each securely sealed. This is shown by the manner in which the seals are opened.

✓ A momentous moment has now come in the history of the universe. That mysterious realm of the future is about to be unlocked, and the far-reaching vista of the years is to be unveiled that God's children might know the times and the seasons as if they were already matters of history. Soon the last of the apostles would join the blood-washed throng of the redeemed in the spirit world, and the church would no longer have the means by which it might receive divine revelations as it needed them. All the knowledge that God's children will need to comfort them and strengthen them in all the varying fortunes and vicissitudes of the centuries as they come and go, and, especially, in that hour of great tribulation that should come upon all the earth, must now be committed unto the last of the men who were qualified to bear his message to men. All of the prophets who had gone before received as it were sealed books which they themselves could only dimly comprehend, and they searched "what time or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should fol- ✓

## HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

---

low them" (1 Pet. 1:11). They searched for the time of the glories that should follow as well as the sufferings of Christ, but they were not able to understand. God told the Jews, through Isaiah: "And all vision is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed" (Isa. 29:11). After Daniel had sought vainly for an understanding of the mysteries committed unto him, he was commanded: "Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are shut up and sealed till the time of the end" (Dan. 12:9). The angels of heaven had also desired to look into the mysteries of God's treasure-house of infinite knowledge and love, but had been forbidden. The crucial moment has now arrived. The heavenly host are gathered expectantly around the throne. The last of the prophets is in the Spirit as an eager spectator to be shown "things which must come to pass hereafter." He was an especially invited guest on this portentous occasion.

A strong angel, in a voice that reached to the ends of the celestial universe, called for one who was worthy to open the seals of the book, but none was found to be worthy. The aged apostle, overwhelmed with the thought of the infinite loss to the church if the contents of the sealed book were not revealed, and with the great deeps of his loving heart stirred, gave vent to a flood of tears. One of the heavenly beings informed him, however, that there was one being who had not as yet materialized in the splendor of the heavenly scene, and who "hath overcome to open the book"—"the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David." Just

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

one (and only one) being in all these circling spheres, or in all the far-off worlds unknown, was found who was worthy to open that book and chart the unmade paths whereon the nations should walk till the streams of time are merged with the ocean of eternity—"the blessed, blessed Jesus, he's the one." We do not realize how much we owe to him. His name is the *only* name that can save, and "in none other is there salvation." He is the *only* door to the sheepfold, for he that "climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." He is the *only* one who was able to open the sealed book. The world would be impoverished of its richest treasure of divine truth, and the race would be plunged into the impenetrable mazes of uncertainty and despair, with no certain knowledge as to the meaning of these mighty upheavals that from time to time shake the very foundations of empires and governments of men.

"Majestic sweetness sits enthroned  
Upon the Saviour's brow;  
His head with radiant glories crowned,  
His lips with grace o'erflow.

"No mortal can with him compare  
Among the sons of men;  
Fairest is he of all the fair  
Who fill the heavenly train."

As those comforting words of the heavenly elder fell upon the ears of the grief-stricken servant of Christ, his eyes fell upon One whose form he had not previously realized. Where he had beheld the seven lamps of fire burning there begins to resolve



## HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

---

itself the figure of a Lamb with seven horns, symbolizing his complete kingly authority and divine power. The lamps of fire are now seen to be his eyes, and symbolize his power to see all things and to enlighten the world as to all of those events even then in the future. The Lamb now becomes the central figure of the heavenly vision, standing "in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders." The Lamb stood "as it had been slain." Every mark of that awful scene of Calvary was on his body as if it had just been made. The nail-prints were there, the jagged spear-wound in his side with the blood and water gushing forth, and his face was torn and bleeding as if the crown of thorns was being pressed by brutal hands upon his brow. His back was bruised as if the cruel scourging had just been inflicted, and from those fearful stripes there came the crimson flow. Weak and trembling he stood as if bearing the weight of the great cross-tree.

Silently he moves "as a lamb led to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." There, in the midst of the ineffable glory of the great white throne, John had all of that dark tragedy of Calvary made fresh again as if it were being re-enacted in his presence, and he was inspired to pen the sublimest meaning of that event that has ever been unfolded to the intelligence of men. Oh that men could comprehend the full meaning of Calvary and what unspeakably precious things the Son of God accomplished for Adam's race by offering him-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

self as the Lamb of God! It is true that in it he fulfilled the prophecies gone before and made God's word true. He redeemed us from the curse of the law, "being made a curse for us." By his death he was enabled to offer eternal life, which the law was unable to do. His blood was effective for cleansing from sin, which the blood of bulls and of goats was powerless to accomplish. By his death he purchased "unto God men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth" (Rev. 5:9, 10).

But the sublimest import of the slaying of the Lamb remains yet to be revealed in that divine pæan of praise that fell from the lips of the heavenly creatures. The reason for the worthiness of the Lamb to take the sealed book of the future, and the reason why he was able to break the seals, was because he was slain and had purchased men unto God. "Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain" (Rev. 5:9).

"O could I speak the matchless worth,  
O could I sound the glories forth,  
Which in my Saviour shine!  
I'd soar and touch the heav'nly strings,  
And vie with Gabriel while he sings,  
In notes almost divine."

Scarcely had the living creatures finished this brief ascription of praise, when the limitless expanse of God's universe became vocal, and, led by the unnumbered angelic host, the infinite reaches of creation, filled with its myriads of worlds and suns and

## HEAVEN THROUGH AN OPEN DOOR

---

these all peopled with the creatures of the mind of God, joined the sublimest anthem of praise to the Lamb that divine ears will ever hear. The strains of this mighty coronation song swell until their echoes shall fill all the ceaseless ages of eternity with unspeakable melody.

“O that, with yonder sacred throng,  
We at his feet may fall;  
We'll join the everlasting song,  
And crown him Lord of all.”

## CHAPTER V.

### OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

REVERENTLY do we approach the investigation of the sealed book, realizing its origin. It is God's book. It was in his right hand from the beginning until One was found who was worthy to open the seals. In the presence of Jehovah and the entire multitude of heavenly beings, the Lamb opens the seals, and here we have the contents of the book spread out before us. In a voice as of thunder one of the four living creatures invited John to come and see the procession of events as each seal was opened. He was not permitted to touch the book, but to gaze and to hear the divine comments upon its symbolism. He had previously been commissioned to write what he saw in a book (Rev. 1:11). The aged apostle certifies that he has given us a faithful transcription of the things which he saw and heard (Rev. 22:8), and the revealing angel attached his signature after John had finished the book (Rev. 22:6).

The character and nature of the subject-matter of the sealed book has been already determined for us. It concerns the "things which must come to pass hereafter" (Rev. 4:1). The sealed book is a forecast of historical events that were to occur after

## OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

---

96 A. D., the date of the visions. They are events which "must shortly come to pass" (Rev. 1:1; 22:6). So, then, within a few years following 96 A. D., the events predicted under the first seal will occur. The nature of these has also been determined for us by the character of the vision that introduced the opening of the sealed book. This is the rule of prophecy. The message that follows a vision is a clearer unfolding of the symbolism of the vision. In the vision of the seven golden candlesticks we found that it was followed by a message giving a record of the church universal, in its light-giving capacity, through seven different periods. The prominent features of the present vision are thrones and crowned ones, so the message that follows will have to do with thrones and rulers and empires. In the vision the scene changes from feature to feature until, in a glorious climax, all creation joins in a coronation song to the Lamb, saying: "Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be blessing, and honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:13). The Lamb has triumphed over all of his enemies and taken his throne. In the message, which the vision introduces, the events connected with the changing scenes of earthly kingdoms will follow each other in succession until they reach their culmination in the sublime climax in Rev. 11:15-18, where the kingdoms of the world have at least yielded to the glorious rule of Jesus Christ. The first seal will open with a description of the conditions in an earthly kingdom immediately succeeding the date of the vision. The

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

varying changes that take place, especially as they affect the kingdoms of the world, will be recounted until their crushing defeat is finally administered and Christ has established his divine kingdom.

**First Seal:**

**Rev. 6: 2**

The description of this first period is brief, but the details are clear and striking. "And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon had a bow; and there was given unto him a crown: and he came forth conquering and to conquer." They are (1) a horse; (2) its color was white; (3) its rider had a bow; (4) he was crowned before he went forth to conquer; (5) he "came forth conquering and to conquer"—he was uniformly victorious in every struggle. Each detail must have its complete fulfillment in the period of history referred to. Under each one of the first four seals the symbol of a horse is used, so that, whatever its meaning may be, the condition which it denotes continues during the four periods. But each seal is distinguished by the color of the horse, as well as by other details. It is apparent that the condition that continues during the four periods varies in each one according to the significance of the color of the horse that marks the period. With the Bible as our dictionary to determine the meaning of these prophetic symbols, there will be no difficulty in translating them into terms easily understood by all.

**THE HORSE.**—"The horse is prepared against the day of battle" (Prov. 21:31). This is in harmony with the last detail. The rider of this



## OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

---

white horse went forth conquering as he led victorious armies. The term "horse" is suggestive of armies and military accomplishments in battles. The color of the horse will indicate the results of the struggles that take place, whether they are successful or unsuccessful, whether the projects undertaken by the military power result in accomplishment or failure. In the nineteenth chapter of Revelation we have the same symbolism—a white horse. The details of this latter incident are different in many respects from that of the seal which we are studying, but it will enable us to understand the significance of the symbol of a "white horse." This incident describes a victorious war undertaken by Christ and "the armies of heaven which followed after him upon white horses." It is said of him who sat upon the white horse that "in righteousness doth he judge and make war." In the further description it is said that he smote them, and that he "shall rule them with a rod of iron." The meaning of the "white horse," then, is a period when the military projects of Rome, which was the world empire at this time, were crowned with success, and prosperous and happy conditions prevailed. This is further confirmed by Gibbon ("Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Vol. V., p. 347). Referring to an incident that occurred at Paris, he says:

"The successor of Constantine was clothed in a robe of white silk and mounted on a milk-white steed, a circumstance, in the French ceremonial, of singular importance: the *white color is considered as the symbol of sovereignty*; and in a

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

late visit, the German emperor, after a haughty demand and a peevish refusal, had been reduced to content himself with a black courser."

At this period, then, the sovereignty of Rome is in the ascendancy and is recognized where it had been formerly rejected.

THE RIDER.—This prosperous period had its beginning with an emperor of Rome. This is indicated by the fact that after the rider was crowned the conquering began. As to who he was, must be determined by the description given. The distinguishing mark of the rider was "a bow." A few writers have insisted that this rider is Christ, starting out on the gospel conquest of the world. This confusion is, no doubt, due to a thoughtless comparison with Rev. 19:11-16, where the rider of a white horse is plainly indicated as being Christ. An examination of the description of these two riders will disclose the fact that they are not the same. The distinguishing mark of the rider in the nineteenth chapter is a "sharp sword." In the vision of the seven golden candlesticks he appears with the same sword proceeding out of his mouth. Nowhere is he represented as having a bow. Again, these events indicated by the first seal "must come to pass after" the time of the vision. The beginning of the gospel conquest, if we can speak of the proclamation of the gospel as such, began on Pentecost, at least sixty-six years before these events could possibly occur. Christ, then, is not the rider here, and neither is he a Roman. The national weapon of the Romans was either a

## OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

---

javelin or the short sword. The bow was the national weapon of the Cretans, and this rider will have some relation to the Cretan people.

History will now give us the record of this period that prophecy has foretold. Domitian was slain by his own domestics, September 18, 96 A. D. He was the last of the emperors of pure Roman blood. Nerva, of Cretan blood, received the crown of the Cæsars. While his reign was brief, it is notable because of the results that flowed from his first act after receiving the crown. Gibbon says:

“Nerva had scarcely accepted the purple from the assassins of Domitian before he discovered that his feeble age was unable to stem the tide of public disorders, which had multiplied under the long tyranny of his predecessor. . . . He adopted Trajan, then about forty years of age, and who commanded a powerful army in lower Germany; and *immediately*, by a decree of the Senate, declared him colleague and successor in the empire.”—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. I., p. 126.

Thus Nerva, of Cretan blood, was crowned and “came forth conquering and to conquer” in the person of Trajan. The reign of Trajan really began when he was proclaimed colleague and successor soon after Nerva attained the crown. Trajan became sole ruler in 98 A. D. We let Gibbon, in his own words, describe the period which began at this time. We remember, as we read his description, the author was not prejudiced in favor of Christianity, and what he says, he was forced to write, to be in harmony with the facts as they occurred.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

"If a man were called to fix the period, in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. . . . The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws".—Vol. I., p. 130.

Again, in the same volume, he speaks of the conquests of Trajan in these words:

"The praises of Alexander, transmitted by a succession of poets and historians, had kindled a dangerous emulation in the mind of Trajan. Like him, the Roman emperor undertook an expedition against the nations of the East; but lamented with a sigh that his advanced age scarcely left him any hopes of equaling the renown of the son of Philip. Yet the success of Trajan, however transient, was rapid and specious. The degenerate Parthians, broken by intestine discord, fled before his arms. He descended the river Tigris in triumph, from the mountains to the Persian Gulf. He had the honor of being the first, as he was the last, of the Roman generals who ever navigated that remote sea. His fleets ravaged the coasts of Arabia, and Trajan vainly flattered himself that he was approaching towards the confines of India. Every day the astonished Senate received the intelligence of new names and new nations that acknowledged his sway."—Vol. I., pp. 48, 49.

Here we have a period, extending from the reign of Domitian to that of Commodus, in which the world was most prosperous and happy, and when absolute power was exercised. The sovereignty of Rome was in the ascendancy. It began when

## OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

---

Nerva, the man with "the bow," received his crown, and in the person of Trajan, whom he adopted, went forth "conquering and to conquer." It was "shortly" after the date of the vision. The description of John corresponds in every detail with the record of history. The limits of the period of the first seal, as given by Gibbon, extend from Domitian to Commodus, or 96-180 A. D. There is nothing in this period to suggest the decay and downfall of earthly power and the exaltation of Christ, but the good seed of the kingdom was being scattered with a lavish hand, and, all unseen and unrealized by men, the forces that work for the fulfilment of God's promises are active under his control.

The symbols of the first seal being impressed upon his mind, the second seal is now opened and a new period of history revealed. "And another horse came forth, a red horse: and to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should slay one another: and there was given to him a great sword." This red horse follows after the white horse, so the period of history which it symbolizes will begin about 180 A. D., and continue until another period is ushered in as denoted by the opening of another seal.

As in the first seal, the "horse" suggests things connected with armies and military power as exercised through armies, but the "horse" is no longer white; it is red like blood. There will be uniform victory no longer. The period of the expansion of the national sovereignty has ended, and conditions

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

that are denoted by the color of red prevail. We use colors as symbols to-day, and think of them as such without any difficulty, but if we read about a red horse in the Bible, we immediately attach mystery to it and feel it can not be understood. An employe of a railroad puts out a red board, and all trains will stop. Workmen hang a red lantern over a ditch in the street, and all drivers turn some other way. No engineer ever questions as to what the red signal-board may mean. Not even a child would attach any mysterious meaning to the red lantern hanging in the street. All mankind attaches the same meaning to it. It is a symbol of serious danger. So naturally does red speak of bloodshed, carnage and rebellion against organized forms of government, that a company of men carrying red flags on the streets of our cities would be recognized at once as anarchists. It means the same in Revelation, and denotes a period of civil strife and rebellion against the recognized rulers. An incident recorded in 2 Kings 3:22, 23 shows that this is the Scripture usage: "And the Moabites saw the water over against them as red as blood: and they said, This is blood; the kings are surely destroyed, and they have smitten each man his fellow." This is the exact condition that is symbolized by the red horse as taking place in the Roman Empire.

This is confirmed also by the other details given. The rider of the red horse was given a great sword. It was his mission to take peace from the earth and men should slay one another. No plainer description of civil discord and internal strife could



be given. The "earth" which John knew was under the sway of Rome and was comprehended by the Roman Empire. It therefore denotes that great world kingdom. To "take peace from the earth" would signify that the empire would be filled with strife and confusion. The long period of internal peace and prosperity that characterized the reign of the Antonines and previous emperors will now give place to one of civil strife and bloodshed. Foes from within and not from without were to cause this disaster. They were to "slay one another." The identifying symbol of the rider was a "great sword." This would denote that the military arm of the government would be the seat of the disturbance, and particularly that portion known as the Prætorian Guards, for when their commanders were installed in the office of Prætorian prefects, they were given a "sword" as a symbol of office, denoting their jurisdiction and power over the lives of men.

A few statements taken from the fifth chapter of Gibbon's "Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire," Vol. I., will accurately describe the details given under the second seal, and show they were fulfilled in the period beginning with the end of the reign of Commodus, 192 A. D., and continuing for ninety-two years:

"The dissolute tyranny of Commodus, *the civil wars* occasioned by his death, and the new maxims introduced by the house of Severus, had all contributed to increase the *dangerous power of the army.*"—P. 212.

"The *power of the sword* is more sensibly felt in an ex-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

tensive monarchy than in a small community. . . . The Prætorian bands, whose licentious fury was the first symptom and cause of the decline of the Roman Empire, scarcely amounted to the last mentioned number" (15,000).—P. 156.

"These assertions, however defective in reason, became unanswerable when the fierce Prætorians increased their weight, by throwing, like the barbarian conqueror of Rome, *their swords into the scale.*"—P. 158.

"The public discontent was soon diffused from the center to the frontiers of the Empire. The armies of Britain, of Syria and of Illyricum lamented the death of Pertinax, in whose company, or under whose command, they had so often fought and conquered. They received with surprise, with indignation and perhaps with envy, the extraordinary intelligence that the Prætorians had disposed of the empire at public auction; and they sternly refused to ratify the ignominious bargain. Their immediate and unanimous revolt was fatal to Julian; but it was *fatal at the same time to public peace.*"—P. 161.

Quotations from this standard historian might be multiplied regarding this period when the Roman Empire was deluged with the blood of its own soldiers. The words italicized show that he has recorded the events of history in language almost identical with that used by the prophet John in foretelling them. During this bloody period fifty-nine rulers ascended the throne, and all but two of these died violent deaths. One more quotation will be given from Sismondi's "Fall of the Roman Empire," Vol. I., p. 36. It will confirm with remarkable exactness the fulfillment of the predictions under the second seal:

"With Commodus commenced the third and most calamitous period. It lasted ninety-two years, from 192 to 284.

## OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

---

During that period thirty-two emperors and twenty-seven pretenders alternately hurled each other from the throne by incessant civil warfare. Ninety-two years of almost incessant civil warfare taught the world on what a frail foundation the virtue of the Antonines had placed the felicity of the empire."

"Peace was taken from the earth." They slew one another. The officers whose symbol of office was "a great sword" were the instigators and leaders in the great internal strife. Following a most contemptible reign of twelve years by Commodus, he was slain by the Prætorian prefect in 192 A. D. Then follow ninety-two years of murder that are fittingly symbolized by the red horse. How was the aged exile of Patmos enabled to foretell with such terse and vivid description the events still more than a century in the future? There is but one answer. He gave us an accurate transcription of the book that was in the right hand of Jehovah. This will be emphasized more and more as new pages are spread before us with the opening of the seals and the accuracy of fulfillment is realized.

**Third Seal:**

Rev. 6: 5, 6

With the opening of the third seal we still find the symbolism of the horse present. Struggle and strife will continue within the Roman Empire. The color of the horse is different, showing that the conditions of the struggle taking place under this seal are different in some particulars from those under the previous seal. The identifying characteristic of the black-horse rider is "a balance in his hand" instead of a sword. The meaning of

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

black is universal in its import. It is the natural consequence of the havoc wrought by the sword in a civil contest. It would be apparent long before the sword had completed its execution. The older generation who still hold in their memories the trying days of civil war in the United States will recall that the weeping of widows and orphans was heard in the land long before the surrender of General Lee, and that the end of the rebellion did not mark the beginning of mourning, hunger and want. The conditions of this period arise out of, and are partly coincident with, the conditions under the second seal. This is plainly indicated. Under the second seal "another horse came forth," clearly denoting that the period symbolized by the white horse was at an end. When the third seal is opened, the writer simply says, "Behold, a black horse." It did not come forth. It was already present. The same is true of "the pale horse" of the fourth seal. The conditions of each period resulted from the conditions of the period immediately preceding. The meaning to be gleaned from the symbolism of the third seal is aptly indicated by the prophet Jeremiah:

"Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets:

Their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.

They that are slain with the sword are better than they that are slain with hunger;

For these pine away, stricken through, for want of the fruits of, the field."—Lam. 4:8, 9.

## OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

---

After a few years of such civil strife as occurred under the second seal, grim hunger would sweep throughout the empire as the black nemesis of judgment. The land ravaged by opposing armies would be robbed of the fruits of the field. The activities of agriculture and commerce would be neglected for the destructive pursuit of arms. More emphatic still is the description of a period of want and excessive taxation which appears in the balance held in the hand of the black-horse rider. "And he that sat thereon had a balance in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, A measure of wheat for a shilling, and three measures of barley for a shilling; and the oil and the wine hurt thou not" (vs. 5, 6). The prophet Ezekiel clearly indicates the conditions that prevail when the balance, the instrument of weight, is prominent. "Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, behold, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight, and with fearfulness; and they shall drink water by measure, and in dismay: that they may want water and bread, and pine away in their iniquity" (Ezek. 4:16, 17). The excessive prices of the staple articles of food characterize the period described. A measure of wheat is about a quart. The price exacted for the quart was the daily wage of a laboring man. At the prevailing wages wheat would sell for about sixty-four dollars per bushel, and barley would sell for about twenty-one dollars per bushel. One could well imagine the hunger and destitution that would ensue if the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

relative prices prevailed to-day that were exacted during the black-horse period. Oil and wine were luxuries of life throughout the East, and while the necessities of life were beyond the reach of the great mass of common people, the rich could still enjoy the luxuries without any increase in cost.

With the continuance of civil war the necessities of government would also require an increase of taxation. Gibbon gives a very vivid picture of the desolation that reigned at the time of Maximin, about 237 A. D.:

“When the troops of Maximin, advancing in excellent order, arrived at the foot of the Julian Alps, they were terrified by the silence and desolation that reigned on the frontiers of Italy. The villages and open towns had been abandoned on their approach by the inhabitants, the cattle had been driven away, the provisions removed or destroyed, the bridges broken down, nor was anything left which could afford either shelter or subsistence to the invader. Such had been the wise orders of the generals of the Senate, whose design was to protract the war, to ruin the army of Maximin by the slow operation of famine.”—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. I., p. 239.

In the same volume, page 221, the historian comments upon the increase of taxation, in these words:

“Nor was the rapacious son of Severus contented with such a measure of taxation as had appeared sufficient to his moderate predecessors. Instead of a twentieth, he exacted a tenth of all legacies and inheritances; and during his reign he crushed alike every part of the empire under the weight of his iron scepter.”



## OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

---

Speaking about the reign of this emperor, on page 189, he says:

"The Senators, compelled by fear to attend his capricious motions, were obliged to provide daily entertainments at an immense expense, which he abandoned with contempt to his guards; and to erect, in every city, magnificent palaces and theaters, which he either disdained to visit, or ordered to be immediately thrown down. The most wealthy families were ruined by partial fines and confiscations, and *the great body of his subjects oppressed by ingenious and aggravated taxes.*"

The oppressions that began to manifest themselves with such violence, and the want that would naturally result, were but the precursors of the period that would follow in the wake of such long-continued and unnatural conditions.

**Fourth Seal:** When the fourth seal was opened a pale horse was already  
**Rev. 6: 7, 8** in the view of the prophet. It did not come forth after the seal was opened. "And he that sat upon him was Death; and Hades followed with him. And there was given to them authority over a fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with famine and with death, by the wild beasts of the earth" (v. 8).

A period of history indicated by such vivid symbolism could not be mistaken by any one. A fourth part of the entire population of the Roman Empire would be claimed by the rider of the pale horse and his companions, for they were given "authority over a fourth part of the earth." Murder, rapine and plunder would be the distinguishing characteristics of the period. Famine and pestilence

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

would claim their share. Wild beasts, also, have a part in the general sorrow that overwhelms the unhappy nation at the time. The color of the horse harmonizes accurately with the other symbols. He has the pallor of death that follows long-continued sickness. It is the sign of national weakness and decay produced by the internal dissensions so long continued. The period, during which this symbolism was completely fulfilled, began about 250 A. D. It embraces the reigns of Decius, Gallus, Æmilianus, Valerian and Gallienus. Gibbon gives the facts as they occurred, and the reader can judge for himself as to the exact agreement between prophecy and history:

“From the great secular games celebrated by Philip, to the death of the emperor Gallienus, there elapsed twenty years of shame and misfortune. During that calamitous period, every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman world was afflicted, by barbarous invaders and military tyrants, and the ruined empire seemed to approach the last and fatal moment of its dissolution.”—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. I., p. 298.

Again the historian reverts to this period in these words:

“Our habits of thinking so fondly connect the order of the universe with the fate of man, that this gloomy period of history has been decorated with inundations, earthquakes, uncommon meteors, preternatural darkness, and a crowd of prodigies, fictitious or exaggerated. But a long and a *general famine* was a calamity of a more serious kind. It was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, which extirpated the produce of the present and the hope of future harvests. Famine is almost always followed by epidemical

## OPENING THE SEALED BOOK

---

diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. Other causes must, however, have contributed to the furious plague which, from the year 250 to the year 265, raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family, of the Roman Empire. During sometime *five thousand persons died daily in Rome*; and many towns, that had escaped the hands of the barbarians, were entirely depopulated.

An exact register was kept at Alexandria of all citizens entitled to receive the distribution of corn. It was found that the ancient number of those comprised between the ages of forty and seventy had been equal to the whole sum of claimants, from fourteen to fourscore years of age, who remained alive after the reign of Gallienus. Applying this authentic fact to the most correct tables of mortality, it evidently proves that above half of the people of Alexandria had perished; and could we venture to extend the analogy to other provinces, we might suspect that *war, pestilence and famine had consumed, in a few years, the moiety of the human species.*"—Vol. I., pp. 343, 344.

God has not left himself without a witness. He makes even the unbelieving historian bear careful and accurate testimony to the complete fulfillment of his word. Unconsciously he uses the very terms indicated by the symbols that John saw. The period is given with precision. The extent to which Death and Hades exercise their authority is estimated by the historian in numbers even exceeding the one-fourth part that was allotted to them.

Four seals have now been opened, and each one has been marked by an announcement by each one of the four living creatures. As to what significance this may have we do not pretend to say further than that the events symbolized are connected with each other in unbroken chain and are related to

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

each other much as cause to effect. With the end of the fourth period pagan Rome has reached that stage of decay when her dissolution was certain and she would give place to a new and a mighty force which, in spite of the turbulence and slaughter, has now developed to proportions that must be reckoned with. With the opening of the fifth seal the subject-matter of the visions will concern the progress of Christianity.

## CHAPTER VI.

### OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

THE symbolism connected with the fifth, sixth and seventh seals stands out in marked contrast with that connected with the first four. The varicolored horses with their riders no longer appear, and the living creatures do not invite the seer to inspect the unsealed page. On the other hand, even the casual reader can not but be impressed that these have to do with spiritual things because of the very terms employed. They speak of the altar, martyrdom, the Lamb, sealing of the redeemed, and the measurement of the temple. Christianity has been insinuating itself in all the ramifications of the empire, and the time has almost arrived when it will take its place as the ruling influence in governmental affairs. Instead of paganism, Christianity will soon become the religion of the vast Roman empire.

**Fifth Seal:** "And when he had opened the fifth  
**Rev. 6: 9-11** seal, I saw underneath the altar the  
souls of them that had been slain for  
the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:  
and they cried with a great voice saying, How long, O

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth?" (vs. 9, 10).

The prominent and distinguishing features of the opening of this seal are (1) the altar; (2) who it is that speaks; (3) their cry. The Jewish tabernacle, with its furniture, was a pattern of heavenly things. The altar which John saw was the divine prototype of the altar of burnt-offering which stood in the outer court or most public place of the tabernacle. It was the place where the officiating priest poured out the blood of the sacrifice and whereon he burnt the fat of the victim (Lev. 4:7-10). It speaks of the slaughter of innocent ones. This is further emphasized by the description that follows. Underneath the altar were seen the souls of them that had been slain, and the reason for their slaying is specifically mentioned. They were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. No language could be simpler. They had been Christians and had suffered martyrdom for the truth. The souls of all the martyrs from Stephen until the time of the opening of the fifth seal were collected underneath the apocalyptic altar. What a company of departed ones it must have been. It is no wonder that when their sympathies for their brethren on earth were made vocal in one united appeal, it is spoken of as a great voice. The bitter trials through which they had passed were now to reach a culmination in the fiercest and most wide-extended persecution that Christianity had yet experienced.

The previous persecutions were more local in



## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

character, although, to a limited extent, they may be called general. The first was under Nero, about 64 A. D. The diabolical emperor ordered the city of Rome to be set on fire, and there followed nine days of conflagration. In order to excuse himself, he determined to lay the whole blame upon Christians, and there followed scenes of inconceivable cruelty. Some were dressed in the skins of beasts and worried to death by dogs, while others were sewed in clothing saturated in wax and set on fire in his gardens. Peter and Paul are reputed to have suffered martyrdom at this time, but we have no means of determining, even approximately, the number of Christians who perished.

The emperor Domitian was the instigator of the second persecution, about 81 A. D. It was said to be his purpose to put all the lineage of David to death in order to destroy the Jewish hope of a Messiah. A great number of Christians suffered martyrdom for the testimony of Jesus during this monster's reign, while others endured excruciating torture, among whom was John, the aged apostle, if ancient tradition be true.

The third persecution is limited to the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, from 108 to 138 A. D. Christianity had now begun to assume such proportions as to arouse the distrust of the rulers. Pliny, governor of Bithynia, memorialized the emperor in regard to the treatment of them in his province. Trajan instructed him that they should not be sought out, but, when they were brought before him, they were to be required to abjure their faith

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

and sacrifice to the gods. Under even this limited edict thousands were slain.

Marcus Aurelius was responsible for the fourth persecution, beginning about 162 A. D. The cruelties of this persecution were such that the onlookers were astonished at the intrepidity of the sufferers. One shudders to read the description of the ingenious and cruel forms of torture inflicted. The persecution was especially severe in Lyons, France. During its continuance many souls were assembled beneath the altar.

During the reign of Severus, beginning 192 A. D., the pagans became alarmed at the progress of Christianity, and they incited the fifth persecution. It attained its largest proportions in Africa. Many eminent saints perished in this period.

A short persecution was begun under Maximin, in the year 235 A. D. While it lasted but a brief period of three years, "numberless Christians were slain without trial, buried indiscriminately in heaps, sometimes fifty or sixty being cast into a pit together, without the least decency."

The spread of Christianity in the Roman army aroused Decius to inaugurate the seventh persecution, and an attempt was made to stamp out this religion from every part of the empire. This began in 249 A. D. Fox says: "It was unfortunate for the gospel that many errors had, about this time, crept into the church: the Christians were at variance with each other; self-interest divided those whom social love ought to have united, and the virulence of pride occasioned a variety of factions.

## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

The heathen in general were ambitious to enforce the imperial decrees upon this occasion, and looked upon the murder of a Christian as a merit to themselves. The martyrs on this occasion were innumerable."

When Valerian ascended the throne in 257 A. D. he instituted a persecution that continued for three years and six months. Rank, age and sex were not regarded. "In Africa it raged with peculiar violence; many thousands received the crown of martyrdom." During the reign of Aurelian, beginning about 274 A. D., the company of martyrs was greatly increased by the large numbers who were slain for the word of God and the testimony which they held.

"Innumerable" is the term that Fox uses to indicate the number of souls beneath the altar at the opening of the fifth seal, when Diocletian entered into Rome as the triumphant "restorer of the Roman world," 303 A. D. Milman emphasizes the importance of this epoch-making date in these words:

"The final contest between paganism and Christianity drew near. Almost three hundred years had elapsed since the divine Author of the new religion had entered upon his mortal life in a small village in Palestine; and now, having gained so powerful ascendancy over the civilized world, *the gospel was to undergo its last and most trying ordeal*, before it should assume the reins of empire, and become the established religion of the Roman world."—*History of Christianity*, Vol. II., p. 207.

That this is the date of the events of the fifth seal is seen from the fact that it follows next in

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

succession after the fourth seal, which period ended upon the accession of Diocletian to the throne in 284 A. D. Nothing of epoch-making importance occurred in relation to Christianity until this date. The emperor was engaged in pacifying and restoring order after the ninety-two years of civil strife that occurred under the second, third and fourth seals. When this seemed to be accomplished, he returned to Rome, and, influenced by arguments as to the alleged dangers of Christianity as a republic growing up within the empire, he set the twenty-third day of February, 303 A. D., as the time to "set bounds to Christianity." Such is the time that harmonizes perfectly with the symbolism employed in this seal. It is in the hour of great stress the soul cries out to God. No greater disaster ever threatened the existence of the religion of Christ than that which was indicated by the ruthless destruction of churches and the slaying of Christians which began with Diocletian's edict.

This great company of martyrs were not crying out for revenge for the wrong that had already been visited upon them, but, in view of the tribulation that was overshadowing the living, their plea was for the Master to take his power and execute righteous judgment to prevent the expected suffering while another persecution should rage. The answer is tender and sympathetic: "And there were given them each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were,

## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

---

should have fulfilled their course" (v. 11). Each of these martyrs was publicly justified by the bestowal of the white robe, the divine raiment of the redeemed, thus teaching that those who were to be killed as they would likewise be arrayed. Though the cup of bitterness should yet be drained to the dregs in the next few years by the suffering saints, there certainly awaited for them the robes of white. Well could they await the times and seasons for the judgments of God to be visited in his own good way. Knowing, then, what was to be in store for the multiplied thousands of faithful Christians who would give up their lives during the next ten years, they would manifest no impatience when told that "they should rest yet for a little time." Gibbon gives an account of the cruelty of this persecution in these words:

"The resentment, or the fears, of Diocletian at length transported him beyond the bounds of moderation, which he had hitherto preserved, and he declared, in a series of cruel edicts, his intention of *abolishing the Christian name*. By the first of these edicts the governors of the provinces were directed to apprehend all persons of the ecclesiastical order; and the prisons destined for the vilest criminals were soon filled with a multitude of bishops, presbyters, deacons, readers and exorcists. By a second edict the magistrates were commanded to employ every method of severity which might reclaim them from their odious superstition, and oblige them to return to the established worship of the gods. This rigorous order was extended, by a subsequent edict, to the whole body of Christians, who were exposed to a violent and general persecution."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. I., pp. 647, 648.

Soon after the persecution became general,

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

Diocletian divested himself of the royal purple, but it was continued in the various parts of the empire by his associates with all of the malignity of the pagan mind. This corresponds to the period described in the letter to the angel of the church in Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11). Its close (the year 313 A. D.) marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the Roman Empire as well as of Christianity as symbolized by the sixth seal.

**Sixth Seal:** The importance of the events symbolized by this seal is indicated by the amount of space devoted to them. In point of time, the period denoted by the strange and wonderful imagery of this prophetic vision follows after that of the fifth seal. It naturally would follow the year 313 A. D.

**Rev. 6: 12-7: 17**

Bold and striking is the symbolism employed. The general impression made upon the mind of the casual reader, if he does not take into consideration that figurative speech is being used, is that the entire cosmical universe is being disrupted and destroyed. As the seal is opened, a "great earthquake" occurs. Not one that simply destroys a city or a province, but this is a "great earthquake." It is one that shakes the very foundations of the world. The hills and the rocks are rent asunder by the mighty disruptive forces from within. The mountains crumble as ashes as they are shaken with its tremendous power. The islands of the sea disappeared. This great catastrophe involves not the earth alone, but also the created universe. The sun ceases its shining, not because its face is hid



## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

---

by clouds, but because dissolution is taking place within itself. Its power to shine has gone, and it appears as the ebon blackness of sackcloth of hair. The full moon that filled the world with the glory of her mellow light became as blood. The multitude of stars were wrested from their places in the firmament as if in the stress of a mighty storm of wind, and they crashed upon the earth as blazing balls of fire. Terror and consternation reigned as the firmament itself disappeared, and humanity fled into the yawning rents of the rock, calling to the reeling mountains: "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of their wrath is come; and who is able to stand?"

That this is not descriptive of the physical destruction of the universe is apparent, after a moment's thought, for two simple reasons. First, it is expressly stated in the first verse of Revelation that its contents were given in symbols or signs—"he sent and 'sign-i-fied' it by his angel unto his servant John" (Rev. 1:1). We can not possibly take this description as applying to the dissolution of the things of the cosmical universe when the Book itself expressly states that we shall not so understand it. Second, the events recorded in the seventh chapter occur after those described here in point of time. "After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or upon any tree" (Rev. 7:1). In

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Rev. 7:3 the angels are commanded: "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we shall have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads." If the physical universe had returned to primordial chaos, such things as hurting the earth, the sea and the trees would be impossible.

These physical terms employed in the description are symbols denoting definite things. Their significance can be accurately determined and their meaning may be easily comprehended. It seems that all the spirits of evil have combined to leave the impression on the minds of men that the Apocalypse is couched in incomprehensible language that none can understand. If similar language were used in a newspaper or in ordinary conversation, no one would attach any difficulty to it. We speak of the "political heavens," the "scientific world," a "sea of faces," a "stream of immigrants," and we never confuse these terms with physical things. Why not use God's book with the same common sense? He has not left us without a witness to the meaning of every symbol employed. The meaning of all Bible language is determined by Bible usage. If it is literal, it is to be understood as the Scripture uses literal terms, and if the language is symbolical, as that of the Apocalypse is plainly stated to be, it must be understood as carrying the same meaning as indicated by their use in other portions of the Bible. Symbols do not have strained or forced meanings. The ideas conveyed by symbolic language are determined by the general significance of the literal terms. Thus, an earthquake is a violent

## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

---

shaking or trembling of the earth produced by prodigious forces exerted from within itself. Destruction follows in its wake. Cities are destroyed, and land disappears in or emerges from the sea. Now, the same general ideas are conveyed by the term when it is used as a symbol. Symbolic language would be meaningless if this were not true.

If the earth signified the Roman Empire, a mighty world power, as John uses it here, then the "great earthquake" would convey the idea that a violent convulsion was being experienced by that ancient monarchy. Destructive forces within itself, political or otherwise, were being exerted and it was rocking, reeling to its fall and dissolution. Long-established customs would crumble as a house with an earth tremor. Its old conditions and old religions succumb and give place to new conditions and a new religion. This is exactly what occurred in the pagan Roman Empire in the year 313 A. D. Then it was that paganism was shaken and overthrown by prodigious forces that had been developed through three hundred years, and a new empire, professedly, took its place.

This period of dissolution of pagan Rome was characterized by other mighty changes, aside from that indicated by an earthquake. "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood; and the stars of the heaven fell unto the earth." The sun, moon and stars stand in a similar relationship to the pagan Roman Empire that these heavenly bodies do toward the physical earth. We have the Scriptural explanation of this

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

in Gen. 1:16: "And God made the two great lights; the greater light *to rule* the day, and the lesser light *to rule* the night: he made the stars also." The sun and moon are rulers, the sun is the supreme ruler. The moon reflects the light which it receives from the sun. The idea conveyed by this symbol finds its representation in the ruler, or set of rulers, who were immediately associated with the head of the empire in government and receive their power and authority directly from him. The stars are represented in the multitude of prominent men who occupied places throughout the empire. That this is the correct thought may be easily verified by reference to various passages of Scripture. Jacob had no difficulty in understanding the dream of Joseph as recorded in Gen. 37:9, 10: "Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream; and, behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me." Jacob did not think for a moment that the heavenly bodies were meant. He answered: "Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?" Here, Jacob, the head and ruler of the family, was the sun. The mother, associated with the father in the control of the family, was the moon. The eleven sons, who were to be heads of eleven tribes and conspicuous in Jewish history, were stars. Daniel speaks of soul-winners as stars. "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever" (Dan. 12:3). This is also the New Testament usage. Jude speaks of a certain class of men who were corrupting the church as "wan-

## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

---

dering stars" (v. 13). Jesus is called "the bright, the morning star" (Rev. 22:16).

In 308 A. D. the Roman Empire was ruled over by Galerius, and associated with him were Licinius, Maximin, Constantine, Maxentius and Maximian. Following the deaths of Maximin and Galerius, the number of emperors was reduced to four, with Maxentius as chief. Gibbon says of him:

"While he passed his indolent life within the walls of his palace or in the neighboring gardens of Sallust, he was repeatedly heard to declare that *he alone was emperor, and that the other princes were no more than his lieutenants, on whom he had devolved the defence of the frontier provinces.*"  
—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. I., p. 478.

The emperor is the sun, and those on "whom he had devolved the defence" are represented by the moon. It was in 312 A. D. that Constantine, at the head of an army of forty thousand soldiers, marched through Gaul towards Rome to overthrow Maxentius, who, as the emperor of that great empire, was the "sun" of the pagan world. In battle after battle Constantine was victorious until the last stand of the vanquished armies was made at Saxa Rubra, nine miles from Rome. Again the tide of battle turned to the side of Constantine. In the confusion of a crushing defeat, the troops of Maxentius rushed by thousands into the deep and rapid stream of the Tiber. Maxentius attempted to escape back to Rome by the way of the Milvian bridge. The crowd was so pressed together, however, that he was forced into the water, where he was immediately drowned by the weight of his armor. Con-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

stantine put to death the two sons of the tyrant, and carefully "extirpated his whole race." Thus did the "sun," the most conspicuous light of the pagan world, cease to shine and became "black as the sackcloth of hair."

Almost immediately Maximin "resolved to try the fortune of civil war." With his army he marched against Licinius. Byzantium surrendered to him after an eleven days' siege. He captured Heraclea, but here he heard that Licinius was but eighteen miles away. Soon the final battle was on, and Licinius won a decisive victory and the provinces of the East acknowledged his authority. The vanquished Maximin died in Tarsus in three or four months afterward, and his family was totally destroyed by Licinius. Scarcely a year passed until Licinius had entered into a conspiracy with Bassianus, another "lesser light" who had been elevated to the rank of Cæsar by Constantine and given authority over Africa. The immediate result was the destruction of Bassianus and Licinius, the last of these associated rulers engaged in civil war with Constantine. After two great battles he sued for peace, which lasted but for a few years. Again they engaged in combat at Hadrianople. The army of Licinius was defeated and he fled to Byzantium. From here he fled into Asia. After suffering many defeats, he laid himself and his purple at the feet of his lord and master. He was imprisoned and soon executed in Thessalonica. Civil war between these rival rulers, who were associated with and received their power from the chief emperor, charac-



## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

---

terized the period following the death of Maxentius. Thus the "whole moon became as blood." Time and space fail to describe the downfall of the conspicuous men of the pagan world whose lights were extinguished in the disaster of the time.

In connection with the phenomena already noticed, "the heaven was removed as a scroll when it is rolled up." Heaven is the place of God's throne, the seat of his power. It is the place from which he rules the universe and executes his laws. The Roman Empire, or "earth," was distinctly pagan. Its "heaven" would be the seat of the power of the pagan deities. The place being removed, there would be no longer any power in these gods, for they no longer have a throne or seat of government. The sun and the moon of the pagan heavens, in the person of Maxentius and the emperors associated with him, having ceased to give their light, and the prominent pagans of the empire having fallen to the ground, paganism as a religion no longer can enforce its dominating principles upon mankind through the avenue of the edicts of pagan emperors. Paganism is overthrown and Christianity takes its place. At the same time that the above is taking place, "every mountain and island were moved out of their places." A comparison of Dan. 2:35 and 44 gives us the symbolic meaning of "mountain." In the thirty-fifth verse a stone becomes "a great mountain." In the forty-fourth and forty-fifth verses we have it identified as a "kingdom." Gen. 10:5 shows that "islands" denote territorial divisions, such as provinces. Then, the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

meaning of the above phrase would be that all the former divisions of the empire would be removed. This was the result of the civil strife between the rival emperors. Gibbon says of the results of the victory of Constantine:

“By this victory of Constantine the Roman world was again united under the authority of one emperor, thirty-seven years after Diocletian had divided his power and provinces with his associate Maximian.”—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. I., p. 506.

Thus, not only were the “mountains” and “islands” removed and the empire had become a unit again, but the pagan power had also been banished in this same struggle. Gibbon says, on the same page just quoted from: “The foundation of Constantinople, and the establishment of the Christian religion, were the immediate and memorable consequences of this revolution.” The date of the execution of Licinius and the restoration of the united empire was 324 A. D. In the foundation of Constantinople and the removal of the capital from Rome, that ancient seat of pagan government, the very foundations of heathen religion crumbled and the vivid symbolism of this part of the sixth seal is completely and accurately fulfilled. The secret of the fear and consternation that filled the hearts of mankind during this period, as indicated in verses 15-17, is found in the fact that Constantine professed Christianity. At the head of his armies was carried a long, white banner upon which was the sign of the cross. The pagans recognized the struggle as a contest between paganism and Chris-

## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

---

tianity, and they rallied to the foes of Constantine. All of these who called for "the rocks and mountains to fall upon them" were not the friends of the Lamb, but his enemies. They were afraid of his wrath. As Constantine swept on from victory to victory, the pagan world was thrown into a chaotic state. Gibbon describes the condition in language very similar to that of John:

"The ruin of the pagan religion is described by the sophists as a dreadful and amazing prodigy, which *covered the earth with darkness and restored the ancient condition of chaos and night.*"

The old customs having passed away, the laws were now tempered by Christian principles. In 331 A. D. the heathen temples were leveled, and before the death of Constantine in 337 A. D. the Roman Empire by imperial edict had become nominally Christian. The far-reaching catastrophe has wrecked the pagan universe, and the vision that follows will reveal the development of the Christian universe upon the ruins of the old.

Sealing God's

Servants:

Rev. 7: 1-8

Following in chronological order the mighty convulsions through which Christianity became the established religion of the state, we have the events which are symbolized by the two visions recorded in chapter 7. "After this" determines for us the relation of these occurrences to the preceding ones. The place where the events are to occur is also determined. "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth." The "earth" is now professed Christian Rome, since

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

it has taken the place of the pagan empire. They are standing on the boundaries that separate the empire from the uncivilized portions of the world. These angels are "holding the four winds of the earth, that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree." An angel is a "ministering spirit." "Winds" are destructive forces that sweep over the earth, leaving death and devastation in their wake. This is emphasized by the command, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees," given in the third verse. The angels are the providential agencies that restrain these destructive forces from at once sweeping over the professed Christian empire to its hurt. They are held back as dogs straining at their leash. The "sea" is a symbol for a multitude of people, as we have already found, and signifies here the population of the empire. A "tree" represents a kingdom or a province. In the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, recorded in the fourth chapter of Daniel, the great tree is said to be the Babylonian Empire. The Jewish nation is called an olive-tree (Rom. 11:24). The trees represent the provinces or vassal kingdoms which made up the empire. These "winds" that threaten the destruction are four in number. These are the conditions that prevail at the death of Constantine, 337 A. D.

These forces of destruction are restrained, temporarily, at the command of another angel who ascended "from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God." None of these forces could sweep over Christian Rome "till we have sealed the servants

## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

---

of our God on their foreheads." This angel is identified by the place from whence he came and by the further fact that he had the seal of God: The seal is a mark testifying to the authority of the one who affixes the seal. The seal of the living God placed upon his servants would be the divine guarantee of their redemption. Paul says: "In whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1: 13, 14). See, also, Eph. 4:30. The angel came from the point that the sun was to appear. Jesus is the Sun of righteousness, and when he ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit was sent to abide with his disciples. This angel is identified with the work of the Holy Spirit.

The number of the sealed is given as 144,000, and they are chosen out of each of the twelve tribes of Israel—twelve thousand from each tribe. John, throughout the Apocalypse, consistently uses all terms applying to the Jews and Israel in their true typical sense. In Rev. 2:9 and 3:9 we find him using the term "Jews" as applying to Christians, or the true followers of Christ. So here the twelve tribes refer to the entire body of professed Christians in the empire. But "they are not all Israel, that are of Israel." While Rome was professedly Christian, still her Christianity was a pretense. Christians can not be made by the edict of an emperor nor by professing to be followers of Christ for the sake of popularity. Out of the multitude

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

that professed Christianity, the angel places the seal upon the genuine and true followers of Christ. The Lord knows his own. They are elect, chosen. As in the days of Elijah, when there was a remnant unknown by the prophet, but known to God, who had not bowed to Baal; so in the unnumbered multitude of nominal Christians there is but a remnant who are worthy of receiving the seal of the living God. This is the significance of the number 144,000. Again, in the fourteenth chapter, we find it as the symbolical number representing those who "have been purchased out of the earth."

This number is made up of an equal number taken from each of the twelve tribes. In passing from literal Israel to spiritual Israel, all tribal preference has been lost. Each tribe is on a plane of equality. In the Old Testament the tribe of Levi had no inheritance in the land, but in this list the tribe of Levi finds a place with the others, signifying that the prerogatives of the Jewish priesthood are no longer maintained. The tribe of Dan is not mentioned here. This tribe left its inheritance and conquered the city of Laish, and hence it became merged with Naphtali. There is now, therefore, no distinction between any part of spiritual Israel. It matters not whether God be worshiped in Jerusalem or in Samaria, so long as he is worshiped "in spirit and in truth." The seal determines who does or who does not have a right to its blessings and privileges. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

All of this describes a period of temporary peace



## OPENING OF THE CHRISTIAN SEALS

---

for the church in the Roman Empire, beginning with the complete overthrow of paganism during the reign of Constantine, and portrayed by the imagery of Rev. 6:12-17. Unmolested by her former opposers and protected from the devastating power of the four winds as they are restrained by the four angels, the church is free to exercise all of her energies in enlargement and development. It is the period of calm after the great storm that resolved paganism into chaos, and during which a new creation will appear in beauty and splendor. As the bud unfolds into the full-blown rose after the spring-time storm, so congregations of disciples appear everywhere throughout the empire as if by magic. Heathen temples are transformed into places where the true and living God is worshiped, and the pure, gentle teaching of the Christ becomes interwoven with the fabric of civilization. Had those four winds been permitted to sweep across the empire before Christianity had time to become ingrained with the life of humanity, the religion of Christ would have been completely blotted from the world. There came, therefore, a period of about seventy years of providential quiet to the church, extending from about 337 A. D. to 410 A. D. During this time it was uncontaminated by the thought of the uncivilized nations without the empire. The only danger that could threaten would be from the corrupting forces from within.

When the sealing is complete and the four winds are about to break forth from their providential restraint in all of their fury to hurt the Christian

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

empire, the heart of the apostle was surcharged with anxiety for the future of the church. Is Christianity to be blotted from the earth, after this brief period of sealing, by these hurtful agencies? Does this small remnant which has already been sealed constitute the entire harvest of the gospel of Christ? If so, it would be pitifully small and unworthy of the great price of Calvary. To answer these unspoken questions, the seer is granted a heaven-vision before the seventh seal is opened and the winds are loosed (Rev. 7:9-17). This vision will dispel all of his anxiety. In it he is permitted to have a momentary glimpse of the last day. Although the mighty storm-clouds are now beginning to envelop the Christian world and its future history is obscured from his vision for the time, yet he sees at the last day, not a remnant only, but a "great multitude whom no man can number." They are "out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues." Although they "come out of great tribulation," he can view with calm complacency the destructive sweep of the four winds across the empire as the seventh seal opened. During this last period of human history, even with its apostasies and corruptions, there shall be gathered out a great, unnumbered multitude, who should be arrayed in white robes and unite in the triumphant redemption song: "Salvation unto our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS

THE Lamb now opens the seventh seal, and the last page of human history unfolds before the eyes of the prophet. The book of the ages is now completely unsealed, and its contents are no longer a mystery. The destiny of empires and peoples and tongues is all uncovered on this last page. The hidden secrets of the future are symbolized here. The fortunes of the church that he loved so well are now unfolded. The aged apostle was overwhelmed with the solemnity of the moment, scarce daring to cast his eyes upon the portentous panorama spread out before him. An unearthly stillness prevailed for a brief space of time, premonitory of the coming storm. The sealing has now been completed, and the four winds are permitted to sweep toward the doomed empire. Seven angels stand before God, "and there were given unto them seven trumpets."

The trumpet sound is the signal for the gathering together of armies to battle. This fact determines the nature of the events to be revealed. Seven periods of war, strife and desolation are to succeed each other. The place that is to be the scene where these disastrous conditions are to prevail is plainly

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

indicated: "And the angel taketh the censer; and he filled it with the fire of the altar, and cast it upon the earth: and there followed thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and an earthquake" (Rev. 8:5). The "earth" is now professed Christian Rome. Mighty convulsions would again disturb and change the character of that age-old world-power. Gibbon gives an interesting account of a great natural convulsion that occurred a few years previous to the time that the first trumpet angel was to sound:

"In the second year of the reign of Valentinian and Valens, on the morning of the twenty-first day of July, the greatest part of the Roman world was shaken by a violent and destructive earthquake. The impression was communicated to the waters; the shores of the Mediterranean were dry by the sudden retreat of the sea . . . but the tide soon returned, with the weight of an immense and irresistible deluge, which was severely felt on the coasts of Sicily, of Dalmatia, of Greece, and of Egypt: large boats were transported, and lodged on the roofs of houses, or at a distance of two miles from shore. . . . They considered these alarming strokes as the prelude only of still more dreadful calamities, and their fearful vanity was disposed to confound the symptoms of a declining empire with a sinking world."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. II., p. 473.

Whether this prodigious natural phenomenon was a portent of the political convulsion that was to rend the empire, we leave the reader to judge. It is sufficient to say that the people of the empire at the time attributed it "to the particular will of the Deity." In any case, the historian dates the disastrous fall of the empire with this time.

## SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS

---

"In the disastrous period of the fall of the Roman Empire, which justly may be dated from the reign of Valens, the happiness and security of each individual were personally attacked; and the arts and labors of the ages were rudely defaced by the Barbarians of Scythia and Germany. The invasions of the Huns precipitated on the provinces of the West, the Gothic nation, which advanced, in less than forty years, from the Danube to the Atlantic, and opened a way, by the success of their arms, to the inroads of so many hostile tribes, more savage than themselves."—*Idem*, p. 474.

Language could not make clearer the fulfillment of "the thunders, and voices, and lightnings, and an earthquake," which followed the casting of fire upon the earth. We have the date of the preliminary part of the seventh seal determined for us by the historian as beginning in the reign of Valens, and continuing for about forty years, or from 367 A. D. to 410 A. D. The fundamental causes are traced in the vision to the prayers of all the saints that had been accumulating during the preceding periods. When the fifth seal was opened, a mighty petition went up from the souls that were beneath the altar. But they were told that they must rest a little season until their "brethren who should be killed as they were, should have fulfilled their course." During the tribulation of Diocletian's persecution, and the turmoil incident to the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the empire, unnumbered millions of prayers must have ascended. But, with the empire Christian in name, spiritual conditions were no better. Apostasy had set in. The gospel was no longer preached in its purity. The Council of Nice had been held in 325 A. D., which

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

caused divisions. A hierarchy was being developed, and was taking the place of the simple primitive organization of the church. The church had come to sustain such relation with the political government that she could not extricate herself, and the prayers of those who could rightly be called saints were continually going up that God would intervene. When the angel of the altar was given incense, "the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God," and the immediate result was the convulsions that followed. Every saint should be persistent in prayer, knowing that every petition is reserved until the proper time, and then the answer follows immediately.

**The First Wind:** "And the first sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."

**Rev. 8: 7**

The "hail and fire, mingled with blood," were cast upon the "earth." How similar is this manifestation to that plague with which Egypt was afflicted when Moses sought to lead God's people out of bondage (Ex. 9: 23, 24). "Hail and fire" indicate devastating agencies that leave destruction in their path. These being mingled with blood denotes that the contests between armies attend the manifestation of the destruction of the existing order of things. The desolating power of the first wind is felt only by "a third part of the earth." At the close of Constantine's reign the Roman Empire was separa-



## SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS

---

ted into three divisions, which were maintained distinct until the fall of Rome. Gibbon says:

“The massacre of the Flavian race was succeeded by a new division of the provinces; which was ratified in a personal interview of the three brothers. Constantine, the eldest of the Cæsars, obtained, with a certain pre-eminence of rank, the possession of the new capital, which bore his name, and that of his father. Thrace, and the countries of the East, were allotted for the patrimony of Constantius; and Constantians was acknowledged as the lawful sovereign of Italy, Africa, and the Western Illyricum.”—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. II., p. 93.

But one of these divisions was seriously affected by the destructive forces at this time. A few sentences descriptive of the ravages of the Gothic barbarians under the leadership of Alaric show the remarkable accuracy with which this first trumpet was fulfilled. In almost identical language profane historians have recorded the sweep of the northern hordes as they swept down over the western third of the Roman Empire. Philostorgius, a historian of the time, says:

“The sword of the barbarians *destroyed the greatest multitude of men*; and, among other calamities, dry heats with *flashes of flame and whirlwinds of fire* occasioned various and intolerable terrors; yea, and *hail* greater than could be held in a man’s hand fell down in several places.”—*Hist. Ecc.*, 1, ii., Ch. 7.

Claudian, in describing this Gothic war, compares the invaders to a *storm of hail* (“*De Bello Getico*,” v., 173). In the thirty-first chapter of Gibbon’s “*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*,”

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

the author confirms the description already given. He describes the invasion as beginning with "the tremendous sound of the *Gothic trumpet*," and, also, "at the first *sound of the trumpet* the Goths left their farms." The devastation that was wrought by these northern tribes is represented by such terms as "the *Gothic conflagration*," and "*blood and conflagration and the burning of trees and herbage* marked their path." When a hermit rebuked Alaric for his ravages, the great leader confounded him by the assertion that he "*felt a secret and preternatural impulse*" that compelled him to march to the gates of Rome.

These will be sufficient to convince the reader that the Gothic invasion which ended in the sack of the city of Rome in 410 A. D. is the complete fulfillment of the symbolism of the seer of Patmos. Six hundred and nineteen years had elapsed since the Eternal City had been menaced by a foreign foe, but, weakened by the preceding periods of disorder, she was unable to protect herself, and for six days she was plundered of her treasures and her buildings burned with fire. The desolation would have been complete but for the sudden death of Alaric and the consequent withdrawal of his army. The barbarians, by the use of enslaved labor, turned aside the channel of the stream Busentinus, and built the tomb of Alaric in its bed. The waters were again turned into their natural course, where they conceal the remains of the barbarian leader, but the memory of his tragic end was sufficient to restrain another invader.

## SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS

---

### The Second

#### Wind:

Rev. 8: 8, 9

The scourge that desolated the third part of the empire following the sounding of the first trumpet affected only the land, as is plainly indicated by the symbolic language. Such terms as "trees" and "grass" denote clearly that devastation was wrought by armies and on land. While these are figurative terms, the ideas which they convey must be in harmony with their literal meaning. When the second trumpet is sounded, the destruction that ensues is effected on the "sea" and on "ships," clearly indicating a maritime warfare.

"And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and there died the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, even they that had life; and the third part of the ships was destroyed" (Rev. 8: 8, 9).

If we could understand the language used in its literal sense, we might gain a clear conception of what it is intended to signify when used in its figurative sense. A "burning mountain" would be one in volcanic eruption, emitting flames, smoke and lava. The casting of this into the sea would produce a violent commotion of the waters, stirring them to unfathomed depths. Clouds of steam would ascend and the surface of the water would be lashed into fury. Billows would rise mountain high, engulfing the ships within range of the disturbance. When we understand the language in its proper figurative meaning, we have no difficulty in

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

grasping the ideas conveyed. The "mountain" is a kingdom or a power. In his threat against Babylon, the prophet says: "Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith Jehovah, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out my hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain" (Jer. 51:25). The "sea" denotes peoples and nations (Rev. 17:15). This kingdom which is in eruption, and bringing terror and death by reason of its violent manifestations, is moved from its place and is hurled into the western third of the Roman people, and a mighty disturbance ensues.

This accurately describes the Vandal invasion from 422 A. D. to 439 A. D. So terrible was the devastation wrought by these fierce barbarians from the north that their name has become a synonym for everything destructive. They swept through Gaul, Spain, and into Africa. Here they established their sway along the coasts of the Mediterranean. The fruitful provinces of Tangier and Tripoli were overwhelmed. A few sentences from Gibbon will indicate the severity of Vandal warfare during this period:

"The hostilities of the barbarians are inflamed by the fierce and lawless spirit which incessantly disturbs their peaceful and domestic society. The Vandals, where they found resistance, seldom gave quarter; and the deaths of their valiant countrymen were expiated by the ruin of the cities under whose walls they had fallen. Careless of the distinctions of age or sex or rank, they employed every species of indignity and torture."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. III., p. 132.

## SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS

---

When the conquest of northern Africa was complete, the Vandals built and equipped a great fleet and swept the Roman fleet from the seas. The waters were reddened with the blood of contending naval forces. The ancient capital now becomes the prey of the rapacious followers of Genseric. After a fourteen days' siege the city was pillaged. The precious treasures that had been gathered from every part of the world during many centuries were either carried away or destroyed. Multitudes were slaughtered. When the Vandal ships sailed away, Rome and Italy were devastated, and fully a third of their inhabitants were dead, and a third of the naval power of the empire was gone.

**The Third Wind:** No sooner had the Vandals completed their desolation of the unhappy empire, than a third wind began to sweep in fury across the Alps and about the doomed city of the Cæsars. This time the agent of destruction is represented as "a star, burning as a torch." Like a brilliant meteor shooting athwart the sky of national life, a great leader will appear, momentarily injecting the bitterness symbolized by "Wormwood," and then disappearing from view.

The figurative description is realized in the meteoric career of Attila the Hun, who has been called "The Scourge of God." Gibbon says of him that he "might aspire to the title of supreme and sole monarch of the Barbarians." He "alone, among the conquerors of ancient and modern times, united the mighty kingdoms of Germany and Scythia."

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

The barbarian princes confessed "that they could not presume to gaze, with a steady eye, on the divine majesty of the king of the Huns." All of the details of this vision were both figuratively and literally fulfilled in the sweep of the Huns through the western empire. The principal operations of this daring and terrible leader were carried on along the rivers that found their sources in the Alps. Leaving the Danube, he moved his standards toward the west. After a march of seven or eight hundred miles, he reached the conflux of the Rhine and the Neckar. After building a bridge of boats, "his myriads were poured, with resistless violence, into the Belgic provinces. From the Rhine and the Moselle, Attila advanced into the heart of Gaul; crossed the Seine at Auxerre." He moved into Italy and spread desolation along the Po and the Addua. Heaps of stone and ashes marked the spots where there had been flourishing cities. When an embassy came from Rome to treat with Attila, he was encamped on the banks of the slow-winding Mincius. Attila, influenced by superstitious fear of sudden death, as was visited upon Alaric, after his sack of Rome, and by the offer of an immense ransom, withdrew his armies from Italy and retired to the Danube. In a short time death suddenly claimed him. An artery bursted, and internal hemorrhage ended his life. The vast empire of the Huns was held together through the genius of this brilliant leader, and upon his death it rapidly collapsed. During the years between 433 A. D. and 453 A. D., however, Attila was the "terror of



## SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS

---

the world," and all the bitterness of "Wormwood" was experienced along the "rivers" in the path of his invincible armies.

The word "river" is a term that denotes armies under strong leaders or kings. This is shown in Isa. 8:7: "Behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the River, strong and many, *even* the king of Assyria and all his glory." The meaning is that all the armies that opposed him would suffer the bitterness of crushing defeats. This, also, was fulfilled with exactness. Gibbon says:

"They dictated the terms of peace, and each condition was an insult to the empire . . . that a fine or ransom of eight pieces of gold should be paid for every Roman captive that escaped from his Barbarian master; that the emperor should renounce all treaties or engagements with the enemies of the Huns. All prisoners taken by the Romans were to be released unconditionally, and at once."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. III., p. 144.

"Wormwood" aptly describes the bitterness that was experienced by the successors of the Cæsars as they yielded to the insulting demands of this cruel barbarian. The Franks, the Gauls, and the other races that composed the western third of the empire, and which are denoted by the term "rivers," found nothing but the bitterness of wormwood as they were vanquished by the "Scourge of God."

The Fourth  
Wind:  
Rev. 8: 12

Three winds have now swept over the ancient empire with destructive fury. As the first trumpet sounds, Alaric the Goth commences his ravages and leaves "burned trees

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

and herbage" in his path. When the second trumpet sounds, Genseric the Vandal vents his fury on the seas and the maritime provinces. When the third trumpet sounds, Attila the Hun further completes the downfall of Rome by his battles and his destruction of cities along the rivers. When the fourth trumpet sounds, this part of the empire, already weakened by these dreadful scourges, is to experience the final shock of doom. Rome, so long the queen city of the world empire, will no longer maintain her ancient dignity, and the territory will pass into the hands of barbarian conquerors. This is plainly denoted by the figurative language used in describing the dissolution of "the third part of the earth." Under the first trumpet, the "earth is burned up." Under the second trumpet, the "sea became blood." Under the third trumpet, the waters of the rivers "became wormwood." There remains only the sky, with its brilliant lights, to be darkened, for extinction to be complete.

This is what occurs as the fourth angel sounds and the fourth wind begins its ravages. "The third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; that the third part of them should be darkened, and the day should not shine for the third part of it, and the night in like manner." We have already found that the "sun" is a symbol, denoting the supreme ruler, or the source of political power. The supreme authority over the entire Roman Empire was vested in the rulers of the three divisions into which it had become separated at the

## SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS

death of Constantine. To darken "the third part of the sun" would mean that the political authority of the third part of the empire would disappear. With the disappearance of this division as a part of the empire, the "moon," which represents the rulers immediately associated with the chief ruler or source of power, would cease to shine or exercise authority.

It was in the year 476 A. D. that a third part of the sun of the Roman Empire was smitten and ceased to give its light. Odoacer, a barbarian, assured his fellow-soldiers that if they would associate themselves with him, that he would extort the justice which had been denied them. Almost spontaneously they flocked to his standard out of every camp and garrison in Italy. Odoacer resolved to abolish the office of emperor in Rome. He entered Italy at the head of the Heruli and defeated the army of Rome at Placentia, at which place Orestes was slain. Romulus, the weak son of Orestes, who had been proclaimed emperor at Ravenna, was banished by the victorious Odoacer, and Rome, which from her seven hills had been the mistress of the nations, ceased to be the seat of political world power. The people who had formerly boasted of a superiority over the rest of mankind, had a barbarian ruling over them, and their hatred of him was suppressed by fear. During the reign of these barbarians, beginning with the downfall of the western empire and ending with the accession of Pope Gregory (589 A. D.), the light of western civilization went out, and the pall of the "Dark

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Ages" enveloped mankind. The flickering candle of Christianity disappeared in the wilderness, and an apostate religion developed rapidly. The Bible was hid away that its light should not be seen in the gathering gloom, and longer delay the manifestation of "the man of sin," who was to sit "in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God" (2 Thess. 2: 4). On the general effect of the barbarian rule, Gibbon remarks:

"Notwithstanding the prudence and success of Odoacer, his kingdom exhibited the sad prospect of misery and desolation. In the division and decline of the empire, the tributary harvests of Egypt and Africa were withdrawn; the numbers of the inhabitants continually diminished with the means of subsistence; and the country was exhausted by the irretrievable losses of war, famine and pestilence. St. Ambrose had deplored the ruin of a populous district, which had once been adorned with the flourishing cities of Bologna, Modena, Regium and Placentia. Pope Gelasius was a subject of Odoacer; and he affirms, with strong exaggeration, that in Æmilia, Tuscany, and the adjacent provinces, the human species was almost extirpated. The plebeians of Rome, who were fed by the hand of their master, perished or disappeared as soon as his liberality was suppressed; the decline of arts reduced the industrious mechanic to idleness and want; and the Senators, who might support with patience the ruin of their country, bewailed their private loss of wealth and luxury. *One-third* of these ample estates, to which the ruin of Italy is originally imputed, was extorted for the use of the conquerors."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. III., p. 262.

The "moon and the stars" still continued to shine dimly after the accession of Odoacer, but in the course of the events of the next fifty years these,

## SEVENTH SEAL AND THE FOUR WINDS

too, ceased to shine. Byron described this period under imagery similar to that of the apostle: "She saw her glories star by star expire" ("Childe Harold," Canto IV.). Thus the once glorious sun of the Roman world was shorn of one-third of her light, her full-orbed moon was veiled, and one-third of her stars was extinguished forever.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE THREE WOE ANGELS

**Announcement**            “And I saw, and I heard an eagle, flying in mid heaven, saying with a great voice, Woe, woe, woe, for them that dwell on the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, who are yet to sound” (Rev. 8:13).

THIS announcement marks the end of the first division of the seven trumpets and the beginning of the second. There is, therefore, a plain line of demarkation between the first four trumpets and the three which follow, just as between the first four seals and the three which follow. This clearly marked division noticed in both the seals and the trumpets has led some to think that they both relate to the same period of time, and that the seals and the trumpets describe the same events under different symbols. The apostle, however, is very careful to indicate that the events symbolized under the seven trumpets follow chronologically after the seventh seal has been opened. “And when he opened the seventh seal, *there followed* a silence in heaven about the space of half an hour” (Rev. 8:1). It was following this silence that the trumpet angels begin to sound. This shows conclusively that the trumpets symbolize the seven



## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

periods of strife that should occur during the seventh-seal period. This reminds us of the incident in the sixth chapter of Joshua, recording the fall of Jericho. The divinely given plan of attack was for the people, in company with seven priests having seven trumpets of rams' horns, to march around the city seven days. On the seventh day they were to march around the city seven times, and at the conclusion the downfall of the city would be accomplished. While seven seals have been opened, representing seven divisions of history in the overthrow of human governments as antagonistic to Christ's kingdom, and represented by Rome, the universal world empire, the last seal is further divided into seven periods represented by seven trumpet angels.

The reason for the marked difference between the plainly distinguished divisions of the seven trumpets is to be found in the nature and character of the events symbolized. With the downfall of the western empire at the hands of Odoacer in 476, fundamental changes gradually took place in its civilization. New elements, hitherto unknown, were injected into the fountain of national life. The manners and customs and religious ideas of the barbarians became incorporated into those of the decadent empire, producing conditions entirely new. Upon the accession of Constantine and the apparent victory of the church, Christianity received a most destructive blow. It was brought into close relations with the state. At the first the state dominated the church. In the Council of Nice (325

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

A. D.), Constantine, as the head of the state, dominated the deliberations of the bishops, and this condition involved the church in dire disaster. The founding of Constantinople as the supreme capital of the ancient empire destroyed in a measure the age-old prestige of Rome as the political world-center. This very fact, however, aided the apostasy from true Christianity that had been developing. The prestige of the bishop of Rome had become very great by this time, because of his office in the capital of the world. The removal of the political capital to Constantinople seemed to leave the Roman bishop free to make Rome the religious capital of the world, with himself in supreme control. With the Episcopal idea already well developed, and with the powerful aid of the emperor, it was not long until the organization of the church had developed along the lines of the organization of the empire, with the Roman bishop assuming the same relationship toward the church that the emperor did toward the empire. The decadence of the state, by reason of the disasters that overwhelmed it, only accelerated the apostasy. As the state was weakened, the influence of the church increased until, in less than two centuries after the downfall of Rome, the church absolutely dominated the state.

In 375 A. D., Gratian renounced the heathen title of "Pontifex Maximus," which title was afterward assumed by the popes. This was at the time when the first trumpet began to sound, and the throne at Rome was so uncertain that the title could no longer be claimed by the political ruler. In 416 A. D.,

## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

Innocent I., bishop of Rome, presumed to require all of the churches in the western division of the empire to conform to the customs of the church at Rome. He was aided in this by the emperor Valentinian III., who issued an edict, in 425, requiring that all the bishops of the western empire obey the bishop of Rome. With the accession of barbarian emperors in 476 A. D., the influence of the church was so great that they acknowledged its superiority over the state. During this period foreign religious elements were incorporated with the already developing apostasy, so that soon the simple Christianity of the New Testament was completely displaced by a counterfeit religious system, the most damnable that ever cursed humanity.

It was during this period immediately following 476 A. D., that the announcement was made that three woes would be visited on "them that dwell on the earth." During the time covered by the sounding of the preceding angels, the western division of the empire had been "burnt up" (Rev. 8:7); that is, it was no longer an integral part of the empire. It was soon broken up into independent states during the course of the barbarian rule, although maintaining for a time a more or less nominal relationship with the central division. These woes will then affect the two remaining divisions more directly. What was known as the central division consisted of Mœsia, Greece, Illyricum and Rhoetia. The eastern division consisted of Asia Minor, Syria, Arabia and Egypt. These countries, then, are to feel the weight of these new calamities.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

### The First Woe:

Rev. 9: 1-11

“And the fifth angel sounded and I saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth: and there was given to him the key of the pit of the abyss. And he opened the pit of the abyss; and there went up smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit” (vs. 1, 2).

The fallen “star” is the first and foremost object of the vision. He had already “fallen from heaven,” or had been deposed from his place of power, at the sounding of the fifth angel. By rights he was a member of a ruling family, but through some circumstance of fortune he had lost that position, and when John first saw him he was “on earth”; that is, he belonged to the great class of the common people. As to whom this “star” represents must be determined by the imagery which follows. The part which he performs in bringing about the calamity that follows is merely to “open the pit to the abyss.” When this is done his work is ended. The “abyss” is the great, dark world that is the present home of demons and evil spirits. It is in this pit that Satan is to be chained during the thousand years of Christ’s reign on earth (Rev. 20: 1, 2). The “star” opens this abode of evil and evil ones, and its murky atmosphere comes forth and settles like a black pall, hiding the face of the “sun” and darkening the air. The “sun” is the chief source of political power in one of these divisions of the Roman Empire. The symbols that follow must determine which one. The air is the medium by and through which the sun transmits its light and power to the earth. When

## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

used as a symbol, it would denote the medium through which the chief ruler exercised his power and authority over his subjects. This medium would include all of the officials in the various parts of the government, and the military power. The imagery would then indicate that the devilish teaching that issued from the abode of demons, as a result of the operations of the "fallen star," obscured the political authority of the chief ruler or rulers of a division of the empire, and that the armies and all of the minor officials ceased to perform their functions in harmony with Roman law and procedure. In other words, that particular portion of the empire ceased to be an integral part of the Roman world so far as its laws and customs are concerned.

The next important thing to discover is what particular part of the empire is affected and the means which brought about the baneful calamities. "Locusts" came forth "out of the smoke." These constitute the scourge that inflicted the misery which mankind experienced during the sounding of the fifth angel. It was during the time when there was a general deterioration of the Roman Empire, and its ancient glories were being obscured, that these "locusts came forth." There was given to them power as of "scorpions." Smith, in his "Dictionary of the Bible," says that in hot climates the sting of the scorpion "often occasions much suffering, and sometimes alarming symptoms." For this reason the term "scorpion" is used as a symbol denoting any scourging or calamity that produces intense suffering. Rehoboam said to his people: "My father

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions" (1 Kings 12:11). These "locusts" have the same power as scorpions, and will inflict much suffering and misery upon mankind. This is plainly indicated by verse 6: "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall in no wise find it; and they shall desire to die, and death fleeth from them." The woe of this period is extreme indeed. So bitter are the conditions that prevail that even death seems preferable to life.

The ravages of these "locusts" were limited, however. "And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men as have not the seal of God on their foreheads" (v. 4). The locust is a destroyer of vegetation, but these "locusts" will inflict their ravages on men. They are further limited in their destructiveness. "And it was given them that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months" (v. 5). These "locusts" were not given to ruthless and wholesale slaughter, but they brought about almost unbearable conditions in society, such as could be likened to the misery produced by a scorpion's sting.

The apostle clearly indicates that these "locusts" are not to be understood in the literal sense of the term. As he proceeds to describe them, we find that they are both bestial and human. "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared for war; and upon their heads as it were crowns like unto gold, and their faces were as men's faces. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth



## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

were as teeth of lions" (vs. 7, 8). Here we find a partial reason for the symbol of "locusts." They travel in swarms of untold numbers, leaving destruction in their wake. These "locusts" are great troops of horses and men, armies of cavalry inflicting misery upon mankind. The men are particularly described. Their head apparel is a yellow turban, presenting the appearance of a crown of gold. They wear their hair long. It falls upon their shoulders as the hair of a woman. Their "teeth," like those of lions, denote their ferocity. These cavalrymen wear armor. "And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron" (v. 9).

All of the symbols used in this description point unerringly to the particular locality from which this scourge is to appear. The native habitat of the locust is Arabia. When the plague of locusts was visited upon Egypt they came upon a strong east wind from the Sinaitic deserts, and they came in such numbers that the earth was darkened (Ex. 10: 13, 14). M. Olivier, a traveler, gives testimony as to the home of the locust. He says: "With the burning south winds there come from the interior of Arabia and from the southern parts of Persia clouds of locusts, whose ravages to these countries are as grievous and nearly as sudden as those of the heaviest hail of Europe." The scorpion is a native of Arabia and the deserts of Sinai. The Arabians are horsemen. The turban worn upon the head is characteristic of Arabians and Eastern peoples. Unlike other soldiers, the Arabian horsemen wore their hair long. In "Antar," written at the very time the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

prophet is speaking of, we find special reference to this characteristic: "He adjusted himself properly, twirled his whiskers, and *folded his hair under his turban, drawing it from off his shoulders.*" The Arabian horsemen wore armor. From Sale's "Koran," we take this sentence: "God hath given you *coats of mail* to defend you in your wars."

The apostle could not have given a clearer description in literal terms than he has given here of the Mohammedan scourge which was visited on mankind. Mohammed was a member of the most illustrious family of a tribe to whom the care of the ancient temple of Mecca was committed. At the time of his birth his grandfather was the ruler of Mecca. In the course of natural events Mohammed would succeed to the office. Shortly after his birth his father died and another family usurped the office of governorship, and Mohammed lost the place of power and authority that rightfully belonged to him. He was a "fallen star," and engaged for a time in the ordinary pursuits of commerce. It was not until 609 A. D. that Mohammed declared himself to be the prophet of God, but previous to this it had been his custom to withdraw to the solitude of the cave of Hera, one month each year, for religious meditation. It was then that he began to release the smoke of the abyss. Gibbon, speaking of the religious condition of the time, says:

"The Christians of the seventh century had insensibly relapsed into a semblance of paganism: their public and private vows were addressed to the relics and images that disgraced the temples of the East: the throne of the Almighty

## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

was *darkened by a cloud of martyrs, and saints, and angels, the objects of popular veneration.*"—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. IV., p. 341.

Now, the darkness was intensified by the development of a religion that was devilish in its origin. Three years were silently employed in making fourteen converts to his cause, and in 612 A. D. he assumed the prophetic office and the "locusts" begin to come forth. The next important date in the development of this false religion is 622 A. D. On July 16 of this year, Mohammed fled from Mecca, and it marks the beginning of the Mohammedan calendar. He found asylum in Medina. The citizens of Medina received these religious outcasts and accepted their religion. The "fallen star" who had been despoiled and banished by his countrymen was now, by the choice of an independent people, exalted to "the rank of a sovereign and invested with the prerogative of forming alliances, and of waging offensive and defensive war." He now announces that he has been commanded to propagatate his religion by the sword. The "locusts" now begin their ravages.

As the prophet had foretold, Mohammed gave the following commands, as recorded by Gibbon:

*"Destroy no palm-trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle, only such as you kill and eat. As you go on, you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God in that way; let them alone, and neither kill them nor destroy their monasteries."*—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. IV., p. 417.

Thus the unbelieving historian has confirmed the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

exact fulfillment of John's prophecy which predicted that "they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only such men as have not the seal of God in their foreheads" (v. 4). In regard to their dealings with all others than those above specified as "religious persons," Mohammed commanded:

"And you will find another sort of people, that belong to the synagogue of Satan, who have shaven crowns; be sure to cleave their skulls, and give them no quarter till they either turn Mohametans or pay tribute" (same page, above volume).

Thus prophecy continues to become history. All who did not "have the seal of God in their foreheads" were "hurt," "tormented." The "Christian dogs" were given their option: the Koran, the tribute or the sword. The Moslem army captured Damascus in 634 A. D., and became masters of Syria by vanquishing the Roman army at the battle of Yermouk in 636 A. D. One year later they captured Jerusalem, and the "abomination of desolation," spoken of by the prophet Daniel, was established in the holy place.

Rapidly do they sweep across Egypt, Persia and northern Africa, and in 710 A. D. they enter Spain and pass on into Gaul with the intention of joining a second Moslem army that had been expected to conquer Constantinople and move across southern Europe. At the battle of Tours the hitherto universal success of the Moslems came to an end. In 732 A. D. the army of Charles Martel administered to them a crushing defeat, and their hopes of enter-

## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

ing Rome vanished forever. In a few years they were expelled from Europe, and the ancient capital of the empire that had suffered from the calamities under the first four trumpets was spared the woes of the fifth trumpet. Divisions arose among caliphs, and the Saracen empire was weakened. In 762 A. D. their capital was established in Bagdad, and in 782 A. D., under the reign of Haroun Al Raschid, the dream of a universal Mohammedan empire was given up and their "tormenting" ceased. They were to "torment" mankind for "five months." Five months equals one hundred and fifty days, which denote one hundred and fifty years. From 612 A. D., the date of the assumption of the prophetic office, to 762 A. D., the date of the establishment of the capital at Bagdad, is exactly one hundred and fifty years. From the beginning of the Syrian invasion in 632 A. D. to the final end of their ravages in 782 A. D. is exactly one hundred and fifty years. Thus history verifies the statements of the seer of Patmos, and establishes the fact that the Bible is the word of God. The secular historians find a problem in the fact of the extraordinary power of the Saracens and the sudden cessation of hostilities that defies their solution. Hallam says:

"These conquests, which astonish the careless and superficial, are less perplexing to the candid inquirer than their cessation—the loss of half the Roman Empire than the preservation of the rest."—*Middle Ages*, Vol. II., p. 169.

Gibbon says:

"The calm historian, who strives to follow the rapid course of the Saracens, must study to explain by what means

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

the church and the state were saved from this impending, and, as it would seem, inevitable danger."

The student of the Apocalypse, written six hundred years before the events occurred, finds no difficulty in finding a satisfactory solution. Although in the year 732 A. D. the Saracens held sway over the greatest empire on earth, extending from India to the Atlantic Ocean, and from a human point of view had the military ability to sweep over and torment southern Europe, Jehovah was mightier than they. He had already described the limits of their conquest, and though "the heavens and the earth pass away," the statements of the Scripture must all be fulfilled. God's word will not fail.

The dominating spirit of the  
**The Second Woe:** first woe was a fallen angel,  
Rev. 9: 13-21 known as Apollyon, who emerged from the abyss after it had been opened by Mohammed (Rev. 9: 11). The succeeding woe that is visited upon mankind will come from a different source, and be directed by a different kind of intelligences:

"And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the horns of the golden altar which is before God, one saying to the sixth angel that had the trumpet, Loose the four angels that are bound at the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, that had been prepared for the hour and day and month and year, that they should kill the third part of men" (vs. 13-15).

This calamity is to occur after the Saracen invasion, for the apostle says: "The first Woe is past: behold, there come yet two Woes hereafter" (v. 12).



## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

This gives us the approximate time of the events. They will occur at sometime after 782 A. D. It will be a scourge visited upon one of the three divisions of the Roman Empire, for the angels were loosed "that they should kill *the third part of men.*" The western part of the empire had been overthrown by the northern barbarians (476 A. D.), under the first four trumpets. The eastern part of the empire had fallen beneath the swarms of Mohammedan locusts (632-782 A. D.). There remained, therefore, only the central division of the empire with Constantinople as its capital, to be overthrown. It is in this region that we must look for the fulfillment of the details of the prophecy.

The agency of destruction consists of "four angels bound at the river Euphrates." We speak of Missouri being bounded on the east by the Mississippi, and find no difficulty in understanding all that is implied by the expression. The laws of the State do not apply to territory any further east. The officers of the State have no authority farther east. They are bound or limited by the river. So in the case of these four angels; their authority was bound by the river Euphrates. That was the western limit of their territory before the sixth angel sounded his trumpet. Then they were "loosed." The Euphrates was no longer their boundary. They passed over it toward the west. These four angels are connected with armies, for in the sixteenth verse we find that "the number of the horsemen was twice ten thousand times ten thousand"; in other words, "two myriads of myriads." This does not signify a

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

definite number of horsemen, but rather a great host.

In the fifty-fourth chapter of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Gibbon describes the nation that inhabited this eastern region. At this time a Turkish Empire had developed in central Asia. The unity of this empire expired with Malek Shah. Following his death it was divided into four parts or dynasties: Persian, and those of Kerman, Syria and Roum. During the last period these Turkish people had accepted the Mohammedan religion, but were not subject to Saracen rule. Of the circumstances of the loosing we find the following record in history:

"The two armies expected the signal [referring to civil contentions], when the caliph, forgetful of the majesty that secluded him from vulgar eyes, interposed his venerable mediation. 'Instead of shedding the blood of your brethren, your brethren both in descent and faith, unite your forces in a holy war against the Greeks, the enemies of God and his apostles.' They listened to his voice; the sultan embraced his rebellious kinsmen, and the eldest, the valiant Soliman, accepted the royal standard, which gave him conquest and hereditary command of the Roman Empire, from Erzeroum to Constantinople, and the unknown regions of the West. Accompanied by his *four brothers*, he *passed the Euphrates*: the Turkish camp was soon seated in the neighborhood of Kutaieh in Phrygia; and his *flying cavalry* laid waste the country as far as the Hellespont and the Black Sea."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. IV., p. 719.

John says that there were four angels. History says there were *four divisions* of the Turkish Empire. John says that the four angels bound at the Euphrates were loosed; that is, that they

## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

were no longer confined by the river. History says they *passed the Euphrates*. John says that they were armies of horsemen. History says *flying cavalry*. A further quotation will emphasize the accuracy of the fulfillment. John says that the number of horsemen was two myriads of myriads. Gibbon says:

"The *myriads* of Turkish horse overspread a frontier of six hundred miles, from Tauris to Erzeroum, and the blood of six hundred and thirty thousand Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian prophet."—*Idem*, Vol. IV., p. 707.

Before we pass to the symbolism that follows, attention must be called to the voice that commanded the angel with the trumpet to loose the four angels that were bound. The voice came from "the horns of the golden altar which is before God" (v. 13). This is the heavenly antitype of the altar of incense that stood before the ark of the covenant in the Jewish tabernacle, for it stood "before God." It was not the altar of burnt-offering, for that stood in the outer court. The significance of the voice issuing from the altar is that it had been violated or profaned. Jehovah said to Cain: "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Gen. 4:10). The voice cried out to God for the punishment of the murderer from the spot where Abel's blood had been shed. See, also, Gen. 31:38; Isa. 66:6; Hab. 2:11; Jas. 5:4. In the service for atonement for sins, the horns of the altar were sprinkled with blood, but in the spiritual antitype this had been neglected. The church had drifted far from the simple ordinances and services

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

of New Testament times, and had substituted pagan rites and ceremonies. The voice calls from the altar, therefore, for judgment upon apostate Christianity for their abandonment of Christ as the only intercessor. They had begun to ask Mary and the saints to intercede. They had begun the "worship of demons, and the idols of gold, and of silver, and of brass, and of stone, and of wood" (v. 20). The purpose of this woe is that it should be a judgment visited upon apostate Christendom. It is significant, therefore, that the historian records in one sentence that "the blood of six hundred and thirty thousand Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian prophet."

The horses and their riders are particularly described. The riders wore breastplates that looked like "fire and hyacinth and brimstone." The color of the breastplates is referred to. It would be red, blue and yellow. Daubuz says: "From their first appearance, the Ottomans have affected to wear warlike apparel of *scarlet, blue and yellow.*" This establishes the fact that the Turks are the horsemen referred to in this "Woe." The particular characteristic of the horses is that from their mouths there appeared to come "fire and smoke and brimstone," and "by these three plagues was the third part of men killed" (vs. 17, 18). These were the destructive agents by which the central division of the Roman Empire was to be overthrown, and they seemed to issue from the mouths of the horses. It will be noticed, also, that this is the first time these appear as agents of destruction. The vision which

## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

John saw was one of myriads of cavalry approaching to the attack. It seemed that as fire and smoke and brimstone issued from the region of the horses' mouths, men fell dead as if killed by the fire, smoke and brimstone. If the vision is true, it could only be fulfilled by the use of gunpowder and firearms. The marvelous thing about it is that history records that in this Turkish invasion gunpowder was used for the first time in the world's history. Gibbon gives us this testimony:

"The only hope of salvation for the Greek Empire, and the adjacent kingdoms, would have been some more powerful weapon, some discovery in the art of war, that should give them a decisive superiority over their Turkish foes. Such a *weapon was in their hands*: such a discovery had been made in the critical moment of their fate. The chemists of China and Europe had found, by casual or elaborate experiments, that a mixture of saltpeter, sulphur and charcoal produces, with a spark of fire, a tremendous explosion."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. V., p. 337.

The Turks had "such a weapon in their hands," and the unbelieving historian is compelled to confirm the accurate fulfillment of John's vision, although twelve centuries had intervened. But the term "horses" must not be taken altogether in a literal sense in the vision. As a symbolical term, it denotes wars, strifes and struggles between contending armies, as under the first four seals. It is in this sense that it is used when it is said: "The power of the horses is in their mouth, and in their tails" (v. 19). The destructive power of these Turkish myriads was due to the use of gunpowder, and the fire, smoke and brimstone seemed to issue

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

from the mouths of the horses that were used in battle. The "tails" are such that they do not have a literal sense. They are "like unto serpents, and have heads" (v. 19). We speak of the "head of the house," and have no difficulty in understanding what is implied. The "head" is the one in authority—the leader. While ordinarily the "tail" would denote that which is humble and lowly and the very opposite of authority, yet among the Turks, even to this day, the "horse-tail" is a symbol of power and authority. The relative dignity and importance of a Turkish pasha are distinctively marked by the ensign of one or more tails. The Turkish victories were, then, to be due to the use of gunpowder and to their effective leadership. Gibbon singles out Alp Arslan as the "greatest prince of his time." Commenting further on this subject, he says:

"The same destructive secret had been revealed to the Moslems, by whom it was *employed with superior energy, zeal, riches and despotism*. The great cannon of Mohammed has been separately noticed—an important and visible object in the history of the times. From the lines, the galleys and the bridge, the Ottoman artillery thundered from all sides; and the camp and the city, the Greeks and the Turks, were involved in a *cloud of smoke* which could only be dispelled in the final deliverance or destruction of the Roman Empire" (same chapter as above).

One other detail of this Turkish "Woe" must be especially noticed. The prophet gives the time limits of it. It is to continue for an "hour and day and month and year" (v. 15). The word translated "year" is not the one that signifies 360 days,



## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

but, rather, 365 days. Then, counting a day for a year, we have 365 years, plus 30 years, plus 1 year, plus a small fraction of a year, or 396 years and a fraction. History corresponds exactly by saying that "the Turks went forth on their career of western conquest, January 18, 1057, and Constantinople fell into their hands May 29, 1453, and the last of the Cæsars lays buried under a mountain of slain." This is 396 years and 130 days. Truly not a "jot or tittle" has been unfulfilled.

The last vestige of that once magnificent empire of the Cæsars has passed into other hands, the proud city of Constantine having succumbed to the Turkish "Woe" in 1453 A. D. It must be remembered that this "Woe" descended upon this division because the "golden altar" had been violated, or because of apostasy. Although churches and temples were turned into Mohammedan mosques following the downfall of the empire, the rest of the world did not heed the judgments visited upon this division, but continued in their apostasy. Verses 20 and 21 describe the character of the idolatry and worship practiced at the time by "the rest of mankind." "The rest of mankind" refers to the inhabitants of what was once the western division of the empire, with Rome as its capital, for the eastern division had long since fallen under the sway of Mohammedanism. In this western division the Papacy had been developing for about eight centuries. During the period of Turkish conquest it reached the zenith of its development. The Pope had assumed superior authority to all earthly mon-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

archs. He crowned and uncrowned kings. He assumed to be vicar of Christ. He exalted "himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God" (2 Thess. 2:4). He presumed to set aside the teaching of Christ and the apostles, and imposed pagan idolatries and sorceries upon the consciences of men. The calm historian will confirm every detail given by the seer of Patmos.

"The first introduction of *symbolic worship* was in the *veneration of the cross and its relics*. The *saints and martyrs*, whose intercession was implored, were seated on the right hand of God; but the gracious and often supernatural favors which, in the popular belief, were showered round their tomb, conveyed an unquestionable sanction of the devout pilgrims, who visited, and touched, and kissed, these lifeless remains, the memorials of their merit and sufferings."—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. IV., p. 249.

"In the restoration of the monks, a thousand *images were exposed to the public veneration*; a thousand legends were invented of their sufferings and miracles. . . . They unanimously pronounced that the *worship of images* is agreeable to Scripture and reason, to the fathers and councils of the church. . . . I shall only notice the judgment of the bishops on the *comparative merit of image-worship and morality*. A monk had concluded a truce with the *dæmon* of fornication, on condition of interrupting his daily prayers to a picture that hung in his cell. His scruples prompted him to consult the abbot. 'Rather than abstain from adoring Christ and his Mother in their holy images, it would be better for you,' replied the casuist, 'to enter every brothel and visit every prostitute in the city'" (same volume, p. 280).

Debauchery and vice of the most flagrant kinds were practiced by many of these so-called successors of Peter, and their hands drip with the blood of

## THE THREE WOE ANGELS

---

unnumbered thousands of the saints whose slaughter they instigated through the centuries. These crimes have always been characteristic of the Papacy wherever it is the predominant power. Even to-day the bestial corruption of the friars in the Philippine Islands nauseated a civilized world when it was uncovered by the investigation of the American Government. Even in our own country the immorality of the priesthood is uncovered by an occasional investigation of the courts. Murder and violence by the Knights of Columbus seem to be of frequent occurrence, but when the Papacy dominated the world all of the abominations spoken of by John were its prevailing characteristics.

It did not repent when divine judgment was visited upon the central division of the empire, but, on the other hand, waxed worse and worse. In 1481 A. D. the Inquisition was established in Spain. In 1487 a crusade of murder was undertaken against the Waldenses in Piedmont. In 1515 Tetzels began his shameless sale of indulgences by the authority of Pope Leo X., which resulted in the events symbolized in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK

WHILE the Mohammedan locusts and the Turkish myriads of cavalry had been devastating the eastern and central divisions of the Roman Empire, the Papacy had steadily insinuated itself into all the affairs of the western division, and at the time that Constantinople was overthrown it had established itself as supreme in political as well as spiritual affairs. The kings of earth submitted to the authority of the blasphemous monarch of the Tiber, and they trembled at his frown. The heathen title, "Pontifex Maximus," renounced by the emperor of Rome in 375 A. D., was now assumed by the occupants of the Papal throne. During that period just preceding the Middle Ages, when darkness settled down over the world like an impenetrable pall, it was easy for the development of an institution of this kind. When paganism was overthrown by Constantine, and the church and state came into close relations, the opportunity was furnished for the development of apostasy. When Constantine removed the seat of government from Rome it furnished the basis for the fraudulent claims, afterward made by the popes, that he had abdicated the ancient capital in their favor. When

## THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK

Rome fell into the hands of the barbarians, the opportunity for the complete development of the apostasy was ripe. Through the use of every art and device that could be conjured up in the mind of Satan to utilize the superstition of the age, the Papacy usurped political as well as spiritual sway over men. In 666 A. D. the Papacy was feared and obeyed throughout the western division of the empire. From this time for more than eight centuries its authority was unquestioned, and in 1515 A. D., when Tetzal began the shameless sale of indulgences, it had every characteristic of a universal world monarchy. It remained, therefore, for this power to be overthrown before the kingdom of Christ could be established. The tenth and eleventh chapters will, then, have to do with events connected with the judgments and final downfall of the Papacy following 1453 A. D.

### **The Strong Angel**

“And I saw another strong angel coming down out of heaven, arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire; and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth” (Rev. 10: 1, 2).

The angel of this vision is declared to be “another” angel—that is, he is not the sixth angel—and the events connected with the work of this angel have no connection with the Turkish “Woe” which that angel announced. We must therefore look for the fulfillment of the imagery of this vision in another class of events. “He set his right foot upon the sea, and his left upon the earth.”

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

The "earth," or the Roman Empire, is now only a part of the scene of his activity: the "sea," which signifies "peoples and nations and tribes and tongues," also is to be included. His work is that in which the great multitudes of mankind are concerned.

The adornment of this angel is similar in a degree to that of the glorified Christ. He is "arrayed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head." There was the sign of divine promise, quickening the expiring hope of mankind. The light of his face will lighten the world after the long period of the Dark Ages. He "sets" his feet upon the "earth" and the "sea," formally taking possession of them in the name of heaven, from whence he came. He had "in his hand a little book open." It was a divine book, and John noticed that it was "open" as he descended. Its being open signified that it contained a message for mankind. The book was delightful food for mankind. The prophet took the book from the angel's hand, and "ate it up," and found it in his mouth as "sweet as honey" (v. 10). However, bitterness followed its assimilation.

**Seven Thunders** When the angel took possession of the "earth" and the "sea" by crying "with a great voice, as a lion roareth," his proclamation was challenged. "Seven thunders uttered their voices." At the first the prophet mistook the character of these "seven thunders," remembering, no doubt, the voice of thunder that accompanied the giving of the divine law on Sinai, and also the incident in Jerusalem, when they had



## THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK

---

mistaken the voice of God, speaking to his Son, for thunder. He prepared to write down, therefore, the message of the seven thunders, thinking that it was divine. A voice came from heaven, saying: "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not" (v. 4). In other words, the divinity of these seven thunders is but a pretension, and their message is a base and fraudulent imposture. We at once realize that the "earth and the sea" is to be the scene of a struggle between the angel with the open book, and the source of the seven thunders which have been aroused to fury by the appearance and proclamation of the heavenly messenger. The events symbolized here, therefore, have to do with this titanic struggle between true and counterfeit divinity, and the weapon of the true divinity is the open book.

Those who are familiar with the events of the Protestant Reformation will recognize at once that they fulfill every detail, as given in this chapter, with surprising accuracy. When, in 1515 A. D., license to commit crime and to engage in all forms of sin was being sold in the name of a pretended religion, the Papacy had reached the foulest depths of its blasphemous depravity, and the dormant consciences of some of its own slaves revolted. Rome never had a more zealous devotee than Martin Luther, who was ordained to the priesthood in 1507. Until this time he had never seen a Bible. The breviary contained all of the knowledge of God that he possessed at this time. He at once began to exercise himself in all of the prescribed exercises

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

for the salvation of his soul, but found no peace. Finding a copy of the Scriptures, he was startled to discover that the mummeries that he had been engaged in were no part of the plan of salvation, but that through faith in Christ a penitent soul attains to justification.

When Tetzel violated every sense of decency in the name of the Papacy, Luther, the eloquent young priest, was stirred, and he nailed his ninety-five theses on the door of the church Oct. 31, 1517. Ordinarily an act of this kind would have occasioned but little notice, but the public mind was in such a state "that it kindled a conflagration that spread with the rapidity of lightning from Wittenberg to the frontiers of Europe." Luther himself was astounded at the mighty commotion that he had stirred up, and found that he was at once the leader and spokesman of the most far-reaching religious movement since the day of Pentecost. The angel had "cried with a great voice, as a lion roareth." It was heard in the Vatican. In 1520 A. D., Luther published his famous treatise on "The Babylonian Captivity of the Church," in which the Papacy is denounced as the kingdom of Babylon and antichrist, and the voice of the angel falls on the ears of Henry VIII., who wrote a "Defense of the Seven Sacraments." For this he received the title of "Defender of the Faith," granted to him in October, 1521 A. D., by Pope Leo X. In April of this same year, Luther was called to account before the Diet of Worms, where he startled that august assembly by refusing to surrender his convictions or his

## THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK

conscience to any power on earth. A historian describing the incident says: "With the imperishable words, 'Here I stand, I can not do otherwise; God help me. Amen,' he sounded the death-knell of ecclesiastical and political tyranny." The angel had set his feet on the "earth and the sea" and irrevocably declared that by right they belong to King Jesus, and should be wrested from the anti-christ, the usurper of Rome. The great, restless "sea" of mankind was stirred to its remotest depths, and the "earth" trembled as the proclamation was uttered.

Rome began to thunder forth her anathemas against the priest and his colaborers. The first session of the Council of Trent (1545 A. D.) marks the period of the anti-Reformation thunders. The accuracy of the prophetic record is further confirmed by the actions of Luther. John says that when the thunders began to utter their voices, he started to write their message, but was forbidden by a voice from heaven. When Rome began to thunder against the reformers, Luther acknowledged that he still felt that the Pope was the vicar of Christ, and that these bulls which he issued had divine authority. Here are his words:

"When I began the affair of the indulgences I was a monk and a most mad Papist. So intoxicated was I, and drenched in Papal dogmas, that I would have been almost ready to murder, or to assist others in murdering, any person who would have uttered a syllable against the duty of obedience to the Pope."

In defense of his action in denouncing the sale

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

of indulgences, Luther wrote to the Pope in these words: "*I will acknowledge thy voice as the voice of Christ speaking in thee.*" Thus at the first the reformers thought that the utterances of the Pope were divine, but when, in Wittenberg, the Bull was burned, Luther had heard "the voice from heaven, saying, Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." He no longer recognized the utterances of the Pope as "Christ speaking in him." Thus we see that the prophet himself represents the reformers in the fulfillment of his prophecy.

Through the long centuries during which the Papacy had control of the consciences of men, the Bible had been taken away from the people. Here and there in monasteries a few copies of the sacred record had been hidden away from the light of day, but none save the priests ever dared to so much as touch the Book. The knowledge of its precious truths was absolutely withdrawn from the human race. In its stead the people were fed upon fabricated traditions and mysteries invented by the priesthood to entammel the intellect and conscience of mankind. It has always been, even to the present time, the purpose of the Papacy to keep its devotees in ignorance of the truth, and, by the threat of excommunication and consequent eternal damnation, to keep them from reading any book except such as is permitted by the authority of Rome. The burning of Protestant Bibles by Romish priests has occurred in the twentieth century. No Catholic can read a secular book which has been placed upon

## THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK

---

the Index, on pain of everlasting torment. When the Reformation burst forth, the Bible was opened up, and for the first time in centuries the people were privileged to read the message of God to the world. Tyndale's translation of the New Testament came forth in 1526 A. D., and Luther's translation of the Bible was published in 1534 A. D.

With what rejoicing did these first reformers feast upon the bread of life, and with what eagerness did they taste of its eternal truths, but it was followed at once with the most bitter persecution. The villages everywhere were lighted up with the burning of Bibles. Tortures were inflicted upon those found in possession of them. Ridley and Latimer were burned at Oxford, Oct. 8, 1555, and Cranmer, March 21, 1556. No one knew better than the priesthood the result of the open Bible in the hands of the people, because it pierces as a two-edged sword the outrageous shams which the Papacy had foisted on them. So the hierarchy was aroused to the most ferocious defense.

When the seven thunders had uttered their voices, the angel uttered the proclamation of judgment on the Papacy. He "lifted up his right hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created the heaven and the things that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein, and the sea and the things that are therein, that there shall be delay no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according to the good tidings which he



## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

declared to his servants the prophets" (vs. 5-7). The judgment has already sat. The proclamation of the angel is the announcement of the penalty decided upon, and the execution of the penalty begins without delay. The completion of the execution of the penalty pronounced against the Papacy will end with the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The time intervening between the proclamation of the penalty and the sounding of the seventh trumpet will witness the progress of the "open book" and the death-struggles of the Papal power as it seeks to maintain its weakening grasp upon the nations and peoples of the world. The great, "strong angel" is the spirit that is incarnate in the host of the servants of Christ who have waged war against the Papal power.

Daniel describes this judgment and confirms the details given by John. The "little horn" spoken of by Daniel refers to the Papacy, as will be seen in a later chapter:

"I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit: his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames, and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld at that time because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burned with fire. And as for the rest of the beasts, their dominion was taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and a time" (Dan. 7: 9-12).



## THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK

---

The angel with the open book that John saw was the angel which came forth to execute the judgments upon the Papacy that were determined at this supreme tribunal which Daniel saw. Daniel was particular to note the time of the event. His attention was called to it "because of the great words which the horn spake." It was a period when the Papacy was most arrogant in its claims and had reached the zenith of its power and corruption. Witness the following excerpt from the claims of one of the popes:

"All earth is my diocese, and I the ordinary of all men, having authority of King of kings upon subjects. I am all in all and above all, so that God Himself, and I, the Vicar of God, both have one consistory, and I am able to do almost all that God can do. In all things that I list, my will is to stand for reason, for I am able by the law to dispense with the law, and of wrong to make justice in correcting laws and changing them. Wherefore, if those things that I do be said not to be done of man, but of God, *what can you make me but God?* Again, if prelates of the Church be called and counted by Constantine for Gods, I, then, being above all prelates, seem by this reason to be *above all Gods*. Wherefore, no marvel if it be in my power to change time and times, to alter and abrogate laws, *to dispense with all things, yea, with the precepts of Christ.*"

These, truly, are "great words." They came forth from a pope of Rome. They are the identical claims made by the blasphemous "horn" of Daniel, also of the "man of sin" described in the second chapter of 2 Thessalonians. These boastings of the popes were uttered in the period between 1453 A. D. and 1518 A. D., when Luther challenged the crimes

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

of Tetzal. This is, then, the period in which the tribunal of God is sitting. Daniel further notices the time that shall elapse from the date of the judgment until the penalty shall be completely executed. He says "that their lives were prolonged for a season and a time." A "time" is a term that signifies a prophetic "year." In Dan. 11:13 we find the prophet saying: "He shall come at the end of times, even of years." In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we find that "time, and times and half a time" are equal to 1,260 days, or three years and a half (vs. 6, 14). A prophetic year signifies a period of 360 years. A "season" is the fourth part of a year, which would signify ninety years. This added to 360 years would make a total of 450 years. Counting from some year between 1453 A. D. and 1518 A. D., a period of 450 years will run until "the little horn" of Daniel, the "man of sin" of Paul, and the Papacy of history will be destroyed and its body be "burned with fire." The work of the "strong angel" is to carry the sentence into execution. The latest date for the completion of his work would be 1968-1972 A. D. Hence, there are those now living who shall witness that glorious day that the enemy of mankind and of human happiness shall cease to exist forever. The Papacy has been the blighting curse of the nations ever since its rise. It has poisoned the wellsprings of religion and made slaves of the souls of men. Its blighting influence is felt in every avenue of life. Rulers, lawmakers, and men in places of power, are too often its subservient tools.

## THE ANGEL WITH THE OPEN BOOK

---

After the apostle had taken the little book and experienced the bitterness that followed, he received a comforting assurance: "Thou must prophesy again over many peoples and nations and tongues and kings" (v. 11). This bitterness, which signified the unspeakable persecutions that were visited upon Protestant Christians by the Papacy, would soon disappear, and the preaching of the evangelical gospel from the open book would spread to the uttermost parts of the earth. The bitterness was fulfilled in the massacre of the Vaudois, 1530 A. D.; the atrocities of the Piedmontese soldiers led by monks; Saint Bartholomew's day in 1572 A. D.; the "war of religion" in Ireland in 1641 A. D.; and the Huguenot persecutions of the same period. The fulfillment of the "prophesying" is found in the bursting forth of the missionary spirit in the latter part of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. "Prophesying" means the proclamation of a message, and the widespread missionary propaganda of the past century satisfies all of the requirements of the term. The gospel has been carried to all of the nations of the world. The Bible has been made an open book by being printed in the languages and dialects of the countries where the missionaries have gone.

As in the fourth chapter of Ezekiel, where the prophet symbolically bears the iniquities of the house of Israel and then of the house of Judah, so in this instance, John, as he eats the "little book," typically represents mankind during the Reformation period. As he "prophesies," he represents the reformers and

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

preachers spreading the evangelical gospel of the "little book" to the uttermost parts of the earth. The reason why it is said that he should prophesy "again" was because for twelve centuries the Bible had been withdrawn from the people and they were in ignorance of its teaching. During the first three centuries the primitive preachers had proclaimed the gospel with comparative fidelity. During the time of the development and establishment of the apostasy it had been superseded by counterfeit oracles of the Papacy, but as the Reformation developed and men were freed from the entrammeling superstitions of Rome, it would again be proclaimed in the simplicity of the former times. The time limit of this chapter is indicated by the spread of the gospel among the nations, or about the beginning of the nineteenth century.

## CHAPTER X.

### TEMPLE MEASURED

**T**HE time limit of the last chapter gives the date for the beginning of the events symbolized in the present chapter, or about the beginning of the nineteenth century. The period described in the eleventh chapter will embrace all of the events between that date and the sounding of the seventh angel and the dawning of Zion's glad morning, as recorded in verses 15 and 18, inclusive. The first event of this period is the measurement of the temple:

"And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and one said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And the court which is without the temple leave without, and measure it not; for it hath been given unto the nations: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (Rev. 11:1, 2).

#### The Reed

The standard of measure is a "reed like unto a rod." A rod is an instrument of correction and punishment, and as such it is used in the Scripture as the symbol of divine authority and power. This rod comes forth from the mouth of Christ. "And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth" (Isa. 11:4). It would represent the words or teaching

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

of Christ. This is confirmed by many statements of the New Testament where the teaching of Christ is indicated as the only standard of measurement. In Matt. 7:24-27 the "words" of Christ are made the absolute standard by which the results are determined. Hearing and doing the "words" of Christ settles the fact of a man being wise, while hearing and doing not settles the fact of a man being foolish. In clear, unmistakable language Jesus declares that his word is to be the standard by which the judgment is to be determined. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). This is still further confirmed by the fact that the reed was given into the hands of an apostle. In the notable prayer of Jesus as recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, he makes this statement: "I have given them thy word" (v. 14). The apostles are the custodians of Christ's word, and, therefore, the New Testament is the reed, or standard of measurement, received by John in the vision to determine the divine proportions.

**Things Measured** The measuring takes place about the beginning of the nineteenth century, and it will determine whether the "temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein" conform to the New Testament standard. The "temple of God" is the first object to be measured. This has no reference to a temple built by human hands, because the temple at Jerusalem had been destroyed with the overthrow of



## TEMPLE MEASURED

---

Jerusalem in 70 A. D. The temple of the Jews, and especially that part of it known as the "Holy Place," containing the altar of incense, the table of showbread and the golden candlesticks, was typical of the church of Christ. This is confirmed by the writer of the Hebrews in the ninth chapter and ninth verse. In writing to the Corinthian church, Paul says: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" (1 Cor. 3:16). The "temple of God" denotes the church. It is to be measured according to the apostolic standard. The "altar," being among the articles of furniture in the temple, is typical of "the ordinances of divine service" in the church of Christ (Heb. 9:1). The ordinances of the church are to be measured at this time to determine whether they are being administered as they were in the apostolic period. The "worshippers" denote those who are the professed members of the church. Their teaching, beliefs and practices will also be submitted to an investigation at this time to determine whether they conform to the New Testament standards.

The measurement is specifically limited to that portion of the temple precincts that typified the church and its ordinances and its membership. The measurement was not to apply to that great class of people outside of professing Christianity. The reason is specifically given: "For it hath been given unto the nations." They are actuated by different motives than are those within the church. They have not submitted to the authority of Christ, but recognize the authority of human governments and

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

are molding and shaping their lives according to human ideals, or those of the Papacy. These are left out, for it is apparent, without measurement, that they do not conform to the divine standard. A note of time is also given in connection with the measurement by the statement: "And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months" (v. 2). Forty and two months of thirty days each would equal 1,260 days, which represent 1,260 years. During this period the nations tread down the "holy city." In the twenty-first chapter we find the "holy city" described as the new Jerusalem and as the tabernacle of God. In this case, then, it refers to the visible church. During the long period of 1,260 years it had been trampled under the foot of the nations under the control of the Papacy. During this period the church of Christ did not manifest any signs of existence, and was seemingly conquered and devastated. The Papal power, exerted through the political governments, effectually controlled religious conditions until the Reformation, visiting with a murderous persecution any attempt to worship God according to the teaching of Christ. At the time of the events symbolized at the beginning of the eleventh chapter, Rome was losing her power, and her persecutions were no longer able to prevent the rise of a visible church. These details are fulfilled in the history of the period beginning in the latter part of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. At that time the true church was due to manifest signs of awakening.

## TEMPLE MEASURED

---

**The Restoration** During the latter half of the eighteenth century a great wave of infidelity swept over the world, due in a large measure to the condition of the visible church of Christ. The church was divided into warring sects. Creeds had destroyed the unity of the church. The Protestant clergy was almost as arrogant as the priesthood of Rome. They lorded it over the pew and presumed to shut the door of the kingdom of heaven against all who would not accept some narrow, sectarian dogmas. The sects were jealous of each other and were devouring each other. Professed followers of Christ were dissipating their energies in defending creeds. The progress of the church was at a standstill. Men of intelligence who had escaped the shackles of the Papacy refused to be enslaved by the creed-makers of Protestantism, and there remained only infidelity for them to embrace. At about the same time godly men in different parts of the world and members of different religious bodies, but with a common impulse, began to investigate the religious situation to discover a remedy for the deplorable conditions.

Among the Methodists James O'Kelly led a movement against the prevailing Episcopal form of government. The Episcopal devotees were so strong that O'Kelly and his followers were compelled to withdraw, and on Christmas Day, 1793, at Manakin Town, North Carolina, a congregation was established with the New Testament as its only discipline. The church was measured by the New Testament "reed." They called themselves "Christians." The

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

significant feature of this movement of O'Kelly is the date upon which the standards were applied. In 533 A. D., Justinian, Roman emperor, issued a decree constituting the bishop of Rome "Head of all the Holy Churches, and of all the Holy Priests of God." This marked a long step in advance in the establishment of the Papacy and the treading down the church of Christ, or the "holy city." Exactly forty-two prophetic months, or 1,260 years, elapsed until 1793 A. D., when the "reed" was used to measure the church.

O'Kelly was not alone in the movement to conform the church to New Testament standards. Dr. Abner Jones, of the Baptists, established congregations at Lyndon, Vermont, and Bradford and Pierpoint, New Hampshire, in 1800-1803 A. D. They would wear no name but Christian and have no rule of faith but the Bible. Barton W. Stone, of the Presbyterians, established many congregations in Kentucky as early as 1804, using the New Testament as the only rule of guidance for their faith. In 1807 Thomas Campbell came to America, and his son, Alexander Campbell, followed in 1809. This was the year in which that notable religious document, "The Declaration and Address," was issued. Among the principles that were set forth in this epoch-making document the chief one may be stated as follows:

"Rejecting human opinions and the inventions of men as of authority, or as having any place in the church of God, we might forever cease from further contentions about such things; returning to and holding fast by the original stand-

## TEMPLE MEASURED

---

ard; *taking the Divine Word alone for our rule*; the Holy Spirit for our teacher and guide; and Christ, alone, as exhibited in the Word, for our salvation; that, by so doing, we may be at peace among ourselves, follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Thus this great movement, which had its origin in various parts of the world and in various divisions of the visible church, and developed through the use of the "reed" or the New Testament, was crystallized into a mighty voice whose slogan was, "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak, and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." The church was measured by the New Testament. The ordinances were measured by the same standard. The Campbells were Presbyterians and had been baptized in infancy. The question of baptism was not raised until a child was born in the home of Alexander Campbell. The question was one which must be decided at once. The father and son, having agreed to conform to the teaching of the New Testament in all things, began an investigation of the Scripture upon this subject. To their surprise, they found that a penitent believer was the only subject of baptism, and that the act was performed by the candidate being immersed in water. They at once were baptized. They also found that there was no precedent for a "religious experience" as a requisite for baptism, but only the declaration of faith from the heart in Christ. The question of the Lord's Supper had already been settled by the New Testament "reed," and the table was spread every first day of the week according to the practice of the



apostolic church. Thus this mighty Restoration movement, holding aloft the New Testament as its only rule of faith, religious practice and Christian living, fulfills even the minutest details of the measurement of the "temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein."

### The Two Witnesses

"And I will give unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks, standing before the Lord of the earth" (Rev. 11:3, 4).

During the same period of 1,260 prophetic days, or 1,260 years, Christ's two witnesses prophesy "clothed in sackcloth." Sackcloth is the garb of affliction, and testifies to the mistreatment of the two witnesses and their desolation during that period. They are also symbolized as "two olive trees" and as two "candlesticks." As witnesses they are to testify, as olive-trees they supply oil for light and heat, and as candlesticks they give light. The Scriptures explain these terms so that there will be no difficulty in understanding their meaning, because there are three different and independent symbols meaning the same thing.

As witnesses they "prophesy." In the Scriptural sense, a prophet is one who speaks for another, as in Ex. 4:15, 16: "And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: . . . And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people." Here Aaron is called the spokesman of Moses. In Ex. 7:1 we find that he is called the prophet of Moses: "See, I



## TEMPLE MEASURED

---

have made thee as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." Moses was to stand in the same relation to Pharaoh that God does to the world. Moses gave the message to Aaron and he in turn declared it unto Pharaoh. Aaron was the mouthpiece or prophet of Moses. These two witnesses are therefore two independent agencies by which the will of God is made known to men. A moment's reflection will convince any one that the only means by which we may know God's will is through the Old and the New Testaments. The combined voice of the writers of the Old Testament constitutes the first witness. The combined voice of the apostles constitutes the second witness. The writer of the Hebrew letter makes this very clear: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2). Here the two witnesses are plainly described. In the "old time" God used the prophets as his spokesmen to declare his will to the fathers, but there came an "end of these days" and he uses a different mouthpiece. He speaks now "in his Son," and the teaching of Christ can be known to us only through what the apostles have recorded in the New Testament. Peter confirmed this when he said: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21).

Their character as "my witnesses" demands that they bear testimony to the one that was speaking. Of the Old Testament Jesus said: "Ye search the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

scriptures, because ye think that in them ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me" (John 5:39). Speaking to the apostles whose testimony is found in the New Testament, Jesus said: "And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). If in their character as "olive trees" and as "candlesticks" they denote the same thing, then there can be no question as to what these may be, for we have three witnesses testifying to the same thing. Speaking about spiritual Israel under the figure of a house, Jeremiah says: "Jehovah called thy name, A green olive tree, fair with goodly fruit" (Jer. 11:16). In Rom. 11:24 spiritual Israel of the old dispensation is likened to a good olive-tree, and spiritual Israel of the new dispensation to a wild olive-tree. But, as they are spokesmen, they can speak only through the Old and New Testaments. In the fourth chapter of Zechariah we have a vision of two olive-trees supplying oil to a candlestick with seven lamps. The angel explains these olive-trees as "the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth" (v. 14). The candlestick with the seven lamps had only a local reference at that time to the temple that was being built by Zerubabel, but in the New Testament it has a larger application. There it denotes the universal church. The light which the church radiates is its message, which it receives only through the Old and New Testaments. These furnish the continuous supply of divine knowledge which the church sheds abroad.

## TEMPLE MEASURED

---

As "candlesticks" these witnesses shed forth light themselves. David spoke of God's word, so far as it had been revealed in his day, in this way: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105). Jesus, speaking to the apostles, said: "Ye are the light of the world." All three of the terms signifying the same thing, the "two witnesses" refer to the Old and the New Testaments. In a more personal way these "witnesses" represent Daniel, the apocalyptic prophet of the Old Testament, and John, the apocalyptic prophet of the New Testament, because these writers proclaim the judgments that succeed each other throughout the period of history between the apostolic age and the end of the world. It is especially noted that the power of these two witnesses proceeds from their mouths. Whatever judgments they have pronounced will be visited at the exact time and upon the identical people spoken of by these prophets. Daniel and John both speak of the spiritual dearth during the days of the sway of the Papacy. Daniel foretells that the Papacy, under the figure of "the little horn," shall have "times and law given into his hand for a time and times and half a time," or for 1,260 years. John foretells that the same power shall tread the holy city "under foot forty and two months," or for 1,260 years. The word which God has spoken through these two witnesses must be fulfilled. Thus, when the Papacy arises, the spiritual rain from heaven ceases and the Papacy is permitted to do exactly as was foretold. Whenever a period arrives in which the prophets

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

have predicted that the "waters would become as blood," a period of civil war began, just as if the prophets themselves controlled the times and events and had brought them to pass by their own word. Whenever these prophets foretold that a plague should occur, it was visited, seemingly at their command.

During the period that the Papacy was desolating the "holy city," these two witnesses were appareled in "sackcloth." That was the period of mourning and affliction for them. The Old and the New Testaments were banished from the world. While not destroyed, the pall of heathen ignorance and superstition veiled their faces. As they testified, no one heeded their testimony. This "sackcloth" period extended from 533 A. D. to 1793 A. D. At this time the "sackcloth" was removed. They began to prophesy to mankind without the intervention of the Papacy, presbyteries or synods, and men began to investigate the Bible for themselves and apply its teaching according to the dictates of conscience. The Bible shone forth with a luster undimmed by a maze of human speculations and traditions. Missionaries began to carry the gospel light to the nations. This was the signal for war. The "beast that cometh up out of the abyss," leading the combined hosts of evil, at once engages in a mighty warfare against the Bible. This "beast" is referred to again in Rev. 17:8, and denotes a phase of the Papal power. The Papacy has always been the enemy of the open Bible, and in 1793 A. D. it rallies the hosts of infidelity to its aid. The first

## TEMPLE MEASURED

---

combat signaling the beginning of the war occurred in France in the above-named year. The national assembly of France abrogated the worship of God, and by decree established the worship of Reason. Churches were turned into temples for the promulgation of atheism and infidelity. The war between the "beast" and the "two witnesses" is still being waged. At the present time a host of the enemy have insinuated themselves into the church under the guise of defenders of the faith, from which vantage-point they seek to destroy both the Old and New Testaments. Boasting of their scholarship, they undermine the faith of the common people in the divine character of the witnesses. Any examination of the Books of Daniel and Revelation is jeered at by these so-called "scholars" as being the evidence of a disordered mind. According to these self-appointed custodians of all Biblical understanding, Daniel and John were not prophets at all, but wrote fiction, or of past events as if they were still in the future. Thus, at the present time, the influence of these two great apocalyptic prophets has been almost destroyed by the insidious attacks of their jeering, scoffing enemies. Few ministers ever speak upon prophetic themes, either through ignorance or fear that they might be thought "unscholarly."

To the Christian the saddest event predicted in the Book of Revelation is that which is mentioned in this connection. "The beast that cometh up out of the abyss shall overcome and kill" the two witnesses. The thought of the Bible being "overcome"



## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

and "killed" is not a pleasant one for a faithful follower of Christ to contemplate, yet it must be so. Every detail of every vision of the prophet has been thus far fulfilled to the minutest particular. This, also, shall surely come to pass. There was a preliminary fulfillment of this prophecy in the banishment of religion and the establishment of the worship of Reason in 1793. After a reign of terror during which France was deluged in blood, she came to her senses, and the decree of the assembly was repealed and the Bible was resurrected. That, however, was only of local effect. The complete fulfillment of this prophecy must be found in an event whose effect is world-wide, for "from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half" (v. 9).

During a period of three and a half prophetic days, or three and one-half years, the Old and New Testaments will be "overcome." Among all the nations of the world the teaching, precepts and warnings of the Bible will be entirely disregarded. Men will give themselves to war and bloodshed. Murder, robbery and oppression will prevail. Unspeakable wrongs will be perpetrated everywhere without scruple. Just as soon as the conflagration that burst forth in Europe in 1914 A. D. spreads to all the nations, as it surely will, then the Bible will be "killed" in the sense spoken of here. The Bible is "killed" in the greater part of Europe now. They have the gentle teachings of the Prince of peace, but these are disregarded. None of the



## TEMPLE MEASURED

---

forces of life are manifest in the Book, but its "dead body" is borne about, even in the trenches as the ruthless slaughter is carried on. That this conflagration of war is spreading is apparent when we consider that the same President who, in 1914, called on the nation to "pray for peace," was, in 1916, addressing large assemblies to create a public sentiment in favor of a military program, and at the present times armies are being mobilized. There is one ray of hope in the dark picture that hangs before us. This period when the Bible will be totally disregarded and all the nations will be swept into the maelstrom of war will last but three years and a half. It will be the period of the "great tribulation" of Dan. 12:1. At the end of these three years and a half, the governments of the world will be so weakened by the mighty struggles in which they have been engaged that they will be tottering and crumbling to their fall. National debts so stupendous will have accumulated that payment will be out of the question. Farms, mills and factories, being deserted by the men for three and a half years, will no longer produce the necessities of life. Want and poverty will stare the living in the face. At this time men will come to a realization that the boasted policies of men and of nations have come to irretrievable disaster, and that the course of action taught by Christ is the only true one. The Old and New Testaments will be "raised from the dead." The "two prophets" will stand "upon their feet." This denotes the turning again to the teaching of the Bible. Their ascension to heaven

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

denotes the fact that at that time a mighty revival of Christianity is taking place as men recognize the authority of the two prophets. This revival has scarcely begun until a "great earthquake" occurs, and the tottering fabric of world government begins to be disintegrated. The Papal power, under the figure of a "city," receives a staggering blow as disaster sweeps a tenth part to destruction. Only one more "Woe" is necessary to destroy this age-old political power that had been masquerading in the garb of religion for 1,260 years.

### **The Seventh Angel**

The final disaster for the Papacy "will come quickly" (v. 14). It is a day of mourning for the Pretender of the Tiber, for in that day he will be shorn of all of the power with which he has oppressed mankind, and he will stand forth with all of his fraudulent pretenses, murders and adulteries transparent before the eyes of mankind, revealed as "the man of sin." The trumpet will sound and the heavens will suddenly become ablaze with the glory of a heavenly host sweeping toward the earth. From all the graveyards of earth the sleeping followers of Christ, having heard the trumpet-call of their King, are coming forth from their tombs, and, with their translated brethren who are alive in that day, they become a mighty host ascending "to meet their Saviour in the air," where they "crown him Lord of all." What a meeting that will be! The bitter sorrows and heavy burdens of earth will be inconsequential as compared with the joy that shall be revealed.

## TEMPLE MEASURED

---

The nations lie prostrate at His feet, and, having learned from bitter experience the vanity of human boastings, yield unto his authority, and a mighty shout of victory echoes to the farthestmost parts of the universe as the voices from heaven join in the proclamation of Christ's glad reign. We may well afford to endure whatever may be our lot during the few years that may elapse until the nations be humiliated, and they are completely crushed by "the stone cut out without hands." Then there remains nothing save the setting up, upon its ruins, of the kingdom that "fills the whole earth."



## Part III.





## CHAPTER XI.

### THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

THE second series of visions has reached its culmination in the establishment of Christ's great world-empire. In them the seer of Patmos had been privileged to witness the changing fortunes of that great Roman Empire as it perpetuated itself in different forms for almost two thousand years. During all of the vicissitudes of its existence through these almost twenty centuries, whether in pagan, professed Christian or Papal forms, the Roman power has been essentially the same blasphemous, persecuting opposer of true Christianity; and, as such, the history of her final overthrow, and the exaltation of the church she has always persecuted, corrupted and trampled down, it is the purpose of this second series of visions to reveal. This series, being finished, is withdrawn, and John is privileged to witness a new series of a different character.

We are not left to any arbitrary division of the Apocalypse. The Holy Spirit has plainly marked the three parallel series of symbols so that men could not make a mistake. The prophetic events symbolized in the letters to the seven churches are introduced by a vision of a divine being in the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

midst of seven golden candlesticks. The prophetic events of the second division are introduced by a vision of a door opened in heaven. In each case the nature of the vision determined the character of the events symbolized in the subject-matter which followed. Likewise, the beginning of the third part of Revelation is clearly indicated by the vision of the opened temple of God in heaven:

**The Vision**                    "And there was opened the temple of God that is in heaven; and there was seen in his temple the ark of his covenant; and there followed lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail" (Rev. 11: 19).

John no longer beholds thrones and them that sit thereon. He is not now concerned with kings and rulers as they lead their armies to glorious victories or to inglorious defeats. He is now privileged to gaze upon the interior of "the temple of God that is in heaven." The temple has to do with spiritual things. It is the place where the priests perform their daily ministrations in obedience to divine law, and where God meets and speaks to his people at the mercy-seat. Particularly was there seen, in his temple, "the ark of his covenant." The ark rested in the innermost sanctuary, the "Holy of Holies." It contained the tables of stone, the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded and bloomed. This series of visions will have to do with things connected with the temple of God. They will symbolize spiritual powers rather than political; spiritual forces and movements rather than physical. After John had gazed upon the "ark

## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

of his covenant," and which was the place of God's presence, "there followed lightnings, and voices, and thunders, and an earthquake, and great hail." Then, the events that follow this introductory vision are of such a nature that they may be characterized by these symbols. Spiritual storms, tumults, convulsions and destructive forces will be described as vision follows vision to the end. This final series of visions will reveal the history of Rome in her spiritual or religious guises, as well as that of the true church of Christ, through the changing centuries. This, being parallel and a mate to the first and second series of visions, will be confined to the same time limits; that is, from 96 A. D. to the second coming of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom.

### First Sign

"And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered. . . . And she was delivered of a son, a man child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne" (Rev. 12: 1, 2, 5).

### Second Sign

"And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems, and his tail draweth the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon standeth before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her child" (Rev. 12: 3, 4).

We have two contemporary and opposing spiritual forces symbolized here. They were the ones

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

that were struggling for the mastery of the world in 96 A. D., but John is giving in these two signs some antecedent history in order that his readers might be enabled to identify them with exactness. The scene presented here reminds us much of that enacted in the garden of Eden at the beginning of the race. There the serpent comes before the woman, not to destroy her, but by deception to ruin and destroy the prospects of the seed of the woman. Following the accomplishment of his purpose, there sprang up enmity between the serpent and the woman, and between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. In the same connection it was foretold that the promised "seed" should bruise the serpent's head.

The spiritual counterpart of the woman is now about to be delivered of her child, and the antagonist of the woman is watching that he may devour the child and nullify the word of God. The woman is resplendently appareled. Her garment is the sun. From her person is radiated all of the divine light that is shed abroad in the world. She is identified, however, by her child. It is a "man child" whose destiny is "to rule the nations with a rod of iron," and he was at once "caught up unto God, and unto his throne." There is but one being whom this description fits, or can fit, and that is the resurrected and ascended Christ. "So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19).

This woman, however, is not the mother that

## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

gave him physical birth, neither is his physical birth spoken of when the woman was delivered. Jesus indicates the events referred to in John 16:21, 22: "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but when she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for the joy that a man is born into the world. And ye therefore now have sorrow." The hour had come for the deliverance of the man child. The travail pains of the woman were the bitter events connected with the crucifixion. The disciples were sorrowing because they were a part of the woman and were experiencing the anguish of her travail. The woman, then, is true spiritual Israel. Micah spoke about this event in these words: "Now why dost thou cry out aloud? Is there no king in thee, is thy counsellor perished, that pangs have taken hold of thee as of a woman in travail? Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail; for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and shalt dwell in the field, and shalt come even unto Babylon" (Mic. 4:9, 10).

Paul uses a similar figure of speech when he says: "We are not the children of a handmaid, but of the free woman" (Gal. 4:31). The "handmaid" spoken of here is spiritual Israel in bondage to the law, and the "free woman" is spiritual Israel loosed from the bondage of the law, or the church. The woman spoken of by John is spiritual Israel at the time of the crucifixion. She was delivered of the "man child" when Christ was raised from the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

dead. "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1:18). (See Rom. 8:29 and Col. 1:15.) Christ was the "firstborn" of spiritual Israel, and the time of his birth was when he came forth from the grave.

While this woman was experiencing the pains of approaching maternity, she is said to have had the "moon under her feet." This refers to the fact that the Jewish dispensation, that reflected the light of the Sun of righteousness, was now about at an end, and she was to be in bondage to the law no longer. "The law and the prophets *were* until John: from that time the gospel of the kingdom of God is preached, and every man entereth violently into it" (Luke 16:16). At the time of the preaching of John, spiritual Israel placed her feet upon the "moon" and arrayed herself with the "sun." During the three and a half years of Jesus' ministry the full flood-light of his teaching filled Israel. Jesus himself said: "When I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:5). At this time spiritual Israel did not comprehend all of the Jews. Paul says: "They are not all Israel, that are of Israel" (Rom. 9:6). Only those who turned away from the traditions of the elders and became disciples of Christ during his ministry could be termed as rightfully being a part of spiritual Israel. Centuries before, Moses had testified that every soul that would not hear the words of the Prophet that was to come, should be cut off from among the people. During his ministry Jesus gathered



## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

out from the Jews a people who constituted true spiritual Israel. The woman wore a "crown of twelve stars." These denote the twelve apostles who were chosen by Jesus and who were to shine in his stead after he ascended to God. After the resurrection, when spiritual Israel had become a mother, she is the church of Christ. She is now the "free woman" spoken of by Paul, and no longer a "handmaid."

The dragon now remains to be identified. It, also, is a "sign," symbolizing a spiritual power that is the antagonist of the woman and her seed. A moment's reflection will make the matter plain. This antagonist was before the woman, waiting to devour the child as soon as it should be born, and he continues his antagonism through the centuries. While the Jews were the most bitter opponents of the church, their hatred could only be exerted through pagan Rome. They admitted to Pilate that they did not have the power of death. It was Pilate, the representative of paganism, who crucified Jesus, and at the time of John's vision paganism was the virulent and persecuting opponent of the church.

The dragon has other marks by which he may be identified. He has "seven heads and ten horns." John explains these terms in the seventeenth chapter. "The seven heads are seven mountains" (v. 9). "Mountain" is a figure of speech denoting a kingdom or form of government. (Compare Dan. 2:35 with 2:44.) There is no need at this time to understand the meaning of the "seven horns,"

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

for when John saw the vision they had no crowns; that is, they did not exercise any power. The heads were crowned and had held sway over men. This dragon was a composite of seven different forms of government that had existed at different periods. John says of these "kings" or forms of government, that "five are fallen, one now is and one is yet to come." The Roman Empire existed under six forms of government up to the time John was writing. Rome had been ruled successively by kings, consuls, dictators, tribunes, decemvirs and emperors. The one yet to come was the rule of the exarchs. Thus the great antagonist of the church was paganism, and it exerted its power through the Roman Empire.

This spiritual power is further identified by the apostle as the Devil and Satan. He is called "the old serpent"; that is, the one that deceived Eve in old times (v. 9). He is the age-old accuser and persecutor of the chosen people of God. He was the invisible spirit of evil that controlled and dominated all of the rapacious, beastly forms of government that had held sway over men from the beginning, so that no matter whether it be ancient Babylon that enslaves the Jews, or whether it be pagan Rome that persecutes the church, or Papal Rome that visits her murderous hate upon the saints, it is Satan incarnate in them all, who seeks to destroy spiritual Israel. He is "the prince of this world" (John 14:30). Ancient Babylon and Papal Rome are the same whether ruled by Nebuchadnezzar or by the Pope, for both are

## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

dominated by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. For this reason John uses the term "Babylon" in this part of Revelation to describe the Papacy, as these visions have to do with spiritual agencies.

### War in Heaven

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels *going forth* to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels; and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him" (Rev. 12:7-9).

When the "man child was caught up to God, unto his throne" (v. 5), John adds that "the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days." This information was added at this point to indicate in a few words that the woman escaped unsullied and unharmed from the dragon and continued for a long space of time in asylum. It also indicates that the true church of Christ maintains the same pure, maternal character, although in hiding.

Now, beginning with verse 7, John relates the causes that led up to the woman's flight and seclusion. When the "man child ascended unto God," war was declared against the dragon. Michael, the prince who stands for the children of spiritual Israel (Dan. 12:1), attacked the Devil and his angels. Michael and his angels were the aggressors. It continued until the Devil and his angels were "cast down to the earth." The reader will see

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

at once that only spiritual forces are engaged in this mighty struggle that is taking place, and that carnal weapons could not therefore have been used in it. The attack is made upon the Devil and his angels in their spiritual character and not in their physical guise as the political Roman Empire. The political power of Rome was not exerted at all during this war.

John could not have made his meaning any plainer if he had said he was describing the victorious progress of the gospel during the apostolic age. Immediately upon the ascension of Christ, the apostles began a warfare against the powers of darkness. They proclaimed the gospel with such power that three thousand were added unto them the first day. They used no weapon but the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12). The gospel spread out into Judea and Samaria and to Antioch. From Antioch the first attack was made by Paul against paganism. In a great pitched battle at Ephesus, described in Acts 19, paganism was routed. Those who formerly practiced the arts of the Devil burned books valued at fifty thousand pieces of silver, and the temple of the goddess Diana was being deserted. Paul, in writing to the Ephesians, described the nature of the warfare that was being carried on and the weapons used: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual

## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6: 11, 12).

Paul and John are both describing the same warfare. It is the combat of the gospel against paganism as a spiritual force. Paganism could not stand against the mighty onslaughts of the gospel. The attack was being carried on everywhere, so that even Paul could say that the gospel was being preached in all the world. In this spiritual struggle paganism was routed and Satan was defeated and "cast down to the earth." He becomes incarnate in the political Roman Empire, as we have before seen that this great world-power comprised the "earth" of John's day. Henceforth Satan will use the carnal weapons of the empire in his attempt to destroy the church. It indicates the beginning of general persecutions of the church by the authority of Rome. The persecution under Domitian, and the one which caused John to be banished to the isle of Patmos, was the first effort of the vanquished prince of evil to use the carnal weapons of his temporal empire in his struggles against a victorious church.

At this point the antecedent history ends and "the things which must come to pass hereafter" begin. The history of this spiritual struggle which had just ended at the time of the vision is given that the reader might have the proper perspective, and understand clearly the true nature of the contestants in the struggle that shall ensue. This is made plain in the shout of victory that was heard as Satan was compelled to resort to carnal weapons.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

“Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuseth them before our God day and night. And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time” (vs. 10-12).

The sentiment expressed in the tenth verse is such as would be voiced by the soldiers of Christ as they realized the invincible power of the gospel, and that the spiritual weapons of the mighty prince of devils could never withstand its progress. The eleventh verse records the means used in casting Satan down. They were “the blood of the Lamb” and “the word of his testimony.” The apostles used these weapons with all of the abandon of men who “counted all things as loss that they might win Christ.” In the twelfth verse warning is given of the woe that the earth and the sea shall experience by reason of the fact that the Devil was in the earth; that is, incarnate in the Roman Empire. This marks an epochal date in the life history of Satan’s rule. In former times he had been able to corrupt spiritual Israel by means of his seductive idolatries and the abominations of pagan worship. Israel and Judah fell an easy prey to his spiritual devices, and their land was polluted with heathen religions. He only used his temporal power to punish them after they had been taken captive.



## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

Now he has met an antagonist that he can not overcome with all of his deceitful devices, and he himself has been vanquished. From the date of John's vision he no longer parades in his true spiritual character, but manifests himself in the great seven-headed monster that was identified as the pagan Roman Empire in the year 96 A. D. Henceforth, until the final victory of the true church at the second coming of Christ, those who rule at Rome are the mere puppets of Satan, whether they be emperors or popes. Satan is the dominating spirit incarnate in the empire, and he uses its rulers and those in authority to give expression to his will and deceitful machinations. Satan has been cast down from "heaven" to the "earth," or the Roman Empire, and there remains no place for him to escape. He must remain in "the earth" until he is completely vanquished and chained in the "abyss." Therefore, Satan will be incarnate in every form of world empire which has its capital at Rome, from 96 A. D. until the coming of Christ, that glorious event still in the future. This will be shown more clearly in the next chapter, as the history of the beasts is traced.

The history recorded in verses 13 to 17, inclusive, begins with this epochal date marked by the events connected with the imprisonment of John 96 A. D., and continuing until the woman has completed her flight and is completely concealed in the wilderness in 666 A. D. John gives in brief this outline of the first epoch of the history of the woman that he may be free to describe, in the next

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

chapter, the "beasts" that arise before she has completed her flight.

At the end of the first century, when the gospel had made such rapid conquests of paganism, Satan was driven to his last citadel, the physical power of a world empire. Here he continued the war against Christianity with greater ferocity than before, using all the physical means of destruction which he could invent. The Roman emperor and his officers did his bidding. "And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the man child" (v. 13). This describes the era of persecution beginning with that under which John suffered, to 313 A. D. During this period the Christians suffered ten persecutions, the last one being, perhaps, the most virulent of them all. The expressed purpose of this last persecution was "to abolish the Christian name from the earth." The history recorded in this verse corresponds in point of time to that of the Ephesian and Smyrna periods of the first part of Revelation, and to the period of the first five seals in the second series of visions.

The fourteenth verse records the fact that the church receives momentary help. "And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and a half a time, from the face of the serpent." This period began with 313 A. D., when Licinius issued his edict of toleration, and continued until 410 A. D. During this time Satan professed

## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

to be Christian. He transformed himself into an "angel of light." Constantine marched to Rome, and, after a contest lasting until 324 A. D., the empire, which had been ruled by six contending emperors, was united with the capital at Constantinople. In 331 A. D. he by decree abolished paganism, and its temples were leveled, and in 337 A. D. half of the inhabitants of the empire professed Christianity and it became the religion of state.

To all outward appearance this was a most glorious victory for the church, but it accelerated her flight to the wilderness and her complete seclusion. The religious wing of the empire and the state wing, when vitally joined together as they were beginning with 325 A. D., would quickly produce an apostasy that would completely eclipse the true church of Christ. It was in the above-named year that the Council of Nice was assembled under the influence of Constantine, and creed-making was inaugurated. The Nicene Creed was promulgated as a yoke that must be worn by every one who wished salvation. During this period four angels providentially restrained the barbarians from the north from overrunning the empire (Rev. 7:1), but in 410 A. D. they were loosed. During this time the church was free from the persecutions that she had experienced in former years, as well as from the blighting and polluting influence of the wild tribes of the north. She was "helped" so that her life could not be completely taken from the earth, although her light might be obscured for a long period of years. John amplifies the history

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

given here, in his description of the first beast in chapter 13.

The "woman" is now in the process of "flight." Dissension in the church, produced by the promulgation of the Nicean Creed, grew more bitter. The weakening of the power of state, and development of the church as represented by the rapidly increasing influence of the bishopric, hastened the coming of the apostasy and the consequent disappearance of true Christianity. In 410 A. D. the streams of wild tribes of the north began to flow into the empire, and the prophetic statements of the fifteenth and sixteenth verses were fulfilled. "And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth." The "earth" at this time was professed Christian Rome. The "waters" are peoples with a corrupt religion, as if coming from the mouth of Satan. Under Odoacer, the Heruli completed the overthrow of the western Roman state in 476 A. D., but not its religion. It "swallowed up" these northern tribes, for they embraced the religion of the empire. This, however, hastened the disappearance of the true church. Between 476 A. D. and 666 A. D. the paganism of these northern tribes was intermingled with the already corrupted religion of the Romans, so that in the last-mentioned year the seclusion of true Christianity was complete, and in its stead the counterfeit Christianity

## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

was wholly established. Twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days, or 1,260 years, are to elapse, during which the Papacy, the monstrous pagan power, is to dominate the religion of the world. In the year 1926 A. D. we may hope to see this Devil-begotten institution completely overwhelmed in the great conflagration which it itself lighted in 1914 A. D.

The "woman" having disappeared in 666 A. D., John now relates doings of the dragon during the 1,260 years of Papal rule. "And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus: and he stood upon the sand of the sea" (Rev. 12:17-13:1). The dragon no longer persecutes the "woman," for she is in a safe retreat "prepared of God," but he persecutes "the rest of her seed." He "went away." He no longer appears in his dragon form in the western empire. The Papacy will do his work effectually in that portion of his domain, and will make relentless war upon any of the woman's seed in that portion of the world under the immediate sway of Rome. In his dragon form, he gives his attention to the rest of the empire, wherever there may be the children of the true church.

The Mohammedan and Turkish invasions are the fulfillment of his "war with the rest of her seed." Now he stands "on the sand of the sea"; that is, on the boundaries of civilization. There he remains in his dragon form as the dominating spirit of the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

heathen world. There the blighting power of the dragon still enslaves humankind with the galling shackles of paganism, dominating it with age-old ignorance, superstition and idolatry.

The appointed times and seasons are in the power of God. Twelve hundred and sixty years is the time appointed for the duration of the Papacy. No power on earth can change it. When it comes to an end, the Papacy will come to an end, and not before. During this period the true church of Christ, represented as a "woman," can not fully appear, for her seclusion corresponds to the dominance of the Papacy. A mighty movement like the Papacy can not suddenly appear. It is only fully developed by a gradual growth through successive stages. The pure religion of the Nazarene became corrupted by a gradual deterioration through corresponding stages. This fact reveals how indelibly this 1,260-year period is written in the history of the Papacy and the corruption of Christianity. Beginning with the victory of Constantine and the events leading up to the Council of Nice, 325 A. D., an epoch-making date in the corruption of Christianity, there extends a period of 1,260 years to the events concluding the reign of Pope Gregory XIII. From 312 A. D., the beginning of the campaign of Constantine, to 1572 A. D., the year of the St. Bartholomew's Massacre, is 1,260 years. From the crushing defeat of his enemies administered by Constantine in 315 A. D., to the edict of pacification with the Protestants in 1575 A. D., is 1,260 years. It will be seen, therefore, that from



## THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON

---

every important event in the development of the Papacy, there extends a period of 1,260 years until a corresponding important event in the destruction of the Papacy. It is not strange, therefore, that 1793 A. D. should be an epoch-making year in the history of Papal Rome, because, 1,260 years before, an edict was issued which declared that the bishop of Rome was the "head of all the Holy Churches of God."

Thus, step by step, the downfall of this Satanical institution can be foretold. In 663 A. D. Vitalianus enjoined the exclusive use of the Latin tongue in religious worship throughout Christendom. The effect of this edict was to unify the religious world and finally establish the world dominance of the Papacy through a body having a common religious speech. In 1923 A. D., therefore, will occur the greatest convulsion which has thus far shaken the Papacy. Its result will be the breaking up and dissolution of that unity which was established 1,260 years before. We do not presume to say just what the nature of the events of 1923 A. D. may be, for the Scripture has not intimated, but they will inaugurate the three-and-a-half-year period ending, the latter part of 1926 A. D., in its complete overthrow. During this period the "two witnesses" of Rev. 11: 3-11 lie slain and unburied. With patience we wait the rapidly approaching events connected with the desolation of the Papacy and its attendant restoration of the "woman clothed with the sun," praying that we who may be alive may have the faith to endure the bitter trials of the time. Many

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

religious organizations, styling themselves churches, have arisen in the years gone by, but from none of them has radiated the glorious light of the Sun of righteousness, because the time was not at hand when all of the traditions and superstitions of a pagan institution were obliterated. As Luther came out of Rome the first rays began to dimly shine. With each succeeding religious movement the light has shone a little brighter, and as we stand in the beginning of the twentieth century the clouds of ecclesiasticism seem ready to part asunder and the clear sky of God's eternal truth be revealed. Men are breaking away from the creeds, centuries old, and are seeking for a basis of faith and worship free from the entrammeling superstitions and relics of Papal domination. Men are hungering for an environment where world-peace will reign, and all mankind will be free to enjoy the fruits of toil.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE WILD BEASTS

HAVING completed the history of the struggle between the Devil, in the form of a dragon, and the church, John now returns to the point where the "woman" was "helped," to amplify his account and give in detail the causes and circumstances that hastened her flight:

<b>The</b>	"And I saw a beast coming up out
<b>Seven-headed,</b>	of the sea, having ten horns and seven
<b>Ten-horned Beast</b>	heads, and on his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads names of blasphemy.

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority" (Rev. 13: 1, 2).

The details concerning this beast are so clear and definite that there is no difficulty in identifying the power that it represents. The prominent, distinguishing characteristics of this "beast" are his seven heads and ten horns. These identify him as being the dragon only partially transformed. He still possesses the distinguishing features of the dragon. Satan was not able to divest himself entirely of those outward marks as he was changed from a "dragon" into a "beast." Even these seven heads and ten horns, however, had undergone some

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

changes. The horns have the ascendancy over the heads in this vision. As a dragon he had "seven heads and ten horns," but as a beast he has "ten horns and seven heads." The horns are now beginning to manifest a prominence which they did not have in the vision of the dragon. In the form of a dragon there were diadems on the heads, while the horns were only mentioned as being present. In the form of a beast, the diadems are transferred from the heads to the horns, while the heads wear "names of blasphemy."

In order to comprehend the full significance of this transformation, it will be necessary to determine the meaning of the symbols used. In the seventh chapter of Daniel we have their definition. "So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things. These great *beasts*, which are four, are four *kings*, that shall arise out of the earth" (Dan. 7:16, 17). A beast denotes a king, but not in a personal sense. The angel amplifies his interpretation and explains more fully what he means by the term "king." In Dan. 7:23 the angel explains the term "beast" in these words: "The fourth *beast* shall be a fourth *kingdom* upon the earth." Thus the term "king" signifies the same thing as the term "kingdom"; that is, it is used with reference to the office of king as representing all of the powers and authority in the kingdom during the entire period of its existence. John's "beast," then, is a great world-kingdom, and all of the various stages of its development from its beginning to its end are comprehended by the term.

## THE WILD BEASTS

---

The term "head" is explained by the prophet, in Rev. 17:9, by another symbol—"mountain." "The seven heads are seven *mountains*, on which the woman sitteth." A "mountain" also denotes a "kingdom." See Jer. 51:25 in this connection, and compare Dan. 2:35 with Dan. 2:44. In Dan. 2:35 the stone is said to become "a great mountain," and the interpretation is given in Dan. 2:44 as a "kingdom." The idea of a kingdom, as conveyed by the term "beast," is different from that signified by the term "mountain." The idea of a "kingdom," as conveyed by the term "beast," is that of the entire life history of the kingdom, without regard to the distinct stages of development or changes in dynasties, while the term "head," or "mountain," refers more particularly to the kingdom in each of these stages, or as it is ruled by succeeding dynasties. Thus, a "beast having seven heads" would signify a kingdom whose entire life history was comprised of seven distinct stages in its development, or of seven succeeding dynasties or forms of government. In each and every stage it is the same "beast" manifesting its power in each successive "head" or dynasty.

The term "horn" also denotes a "kingdom," but the idea conveyed is distinct from those conveyed by either "beast" or "head." The angel explains this fully in Dan. 8:20. Daniel had seen a vision of a "ram which had two horns." This ram, being a "beast," represents the Medo-Persian empire as a unitous whole, but the two horns denoted the two contemporary divisions of that

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

world-kingdom. "The ram which thou sawest, that had the two *horns*, they are the kings of *Media and Persia*."

We are now in a position to understand the meaning conveyed by the symbols which John uses. He is describing a world-kingdom. During its history it had seven distinct forms of government, and in its final stage it was broken up into ten contemporary divisions or kingdoms. John definitely identifies this beastly power. It was holding sway of the world in his day, for he says that five of the heads had already "fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come" (Rev. 17:10). The Roman Empire was holding sway, in one of its stages of development, in John's day. This makes it absolutely certain that this great earthly government is the one that is described by the term "beast." It had ruled through five successive forms of government when John wrote. These had been (1) kings, (2) consuls, (3) dictators, (4) decemvirs and (5) tribunes. As John was writing, the authority of the empire was exercised through crowned emperors. This period began with the reign of Augustus, 27 B. C., and was therefore the existing "head" in 96 A. D. The seventh "head" was when the empire was ruled by military emperors who did not ascend to the throne by right of succession. This seventh form of government began with the reign of Diocletian, 284 A. D.

The dragon has already been identified as the Roman Empire, dominated by the spirit of paganism. The city of Rome was the "seat" or capital of the



## THE WILD BEASTS

---

empire. The "beast," as described in this vision, was the power that succeeded the pagan empire, for it is distinctly stated that the "dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority." This took place during the conquest of the empire by Constantine (313-324 A. D.). During this period paganism gave its power and throne and authority to professed Christian emperors. The Roman Empire was no longer dominated by the spirit of paganism, but by the spirit of Christianity as it was understood at the time. The "beast," as it appeared in this vision, represents the Roman Empire as it began to be dominated by the spirit of professed Christianity in 324 A. D. As a political government, it was then in its seventh stage of development; that is, when it was ruled by military emperors. This had begun in 284 A. D., as mentioned above.

It was in the last end of this final form of rule that the empire was separated into ten distinct contemporary divisions or independent kingdoms. These, at the first, were (1) the Anglo-Saxons, (2) the Franks of central France, (3) the Alleman-Franks of eastern France, (4) the Burgundian Franks, (5) the Visigoths, (6) the Suevi, (7) the Vandals, (8) the Ostro-Goths in Italy, (9) the Bavarians and (10) the Lombards. As the centuries passed by, these horns, through the various changes brought about by war and the breaking up of the entire territory of the ancient empire, assumed the final form in which they exist to-day. These divisions are England, Spain, Italy, France, Ger-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

many, Russia, Macedonia, Egypt, Syria and Persia.

When the empire was broken up into ten contemporary divisions, the authority of the former united government was exercised through them, and the "horns" are said to wear diadems. During the period when paganism dominated the empire, it was united and all authority was exercised through the existing "head," and hence at that time the "head" was said to wear a diadem. Even throughout the decadent period up to the actual breaking up of the empire into separate divisions following 476 A. D., the emperor held a semblance of authority over the entire kingdom. When this breaking up occurred, the diadems passed from the "heads" and were henceforth worn by the "horns."

The professed Christian Roman Empire is, then, what is described by this vision of the seven-headed, ten-horned beast. It is important that we notice the other details given, for they depict the true spiritual nature of this earthly government. When the Devil incarnate in the pagan empire professed to be a Christian, he did not divest himself of his former distinguishing marks. He was the dominating spirit of the professed Christian empire, as he was of the pagan form of government that preceded it. It had the Satanic characteristics of the dragon, for it had the same seven heads and ten horns. These branded it as being Satan's. He had transformed himself from a dragon into a beast. That is not a fit symbol for an empire dominated by the spirit of Christ. A beast can only symbolize a government that is fierce, cruel and

## THE WILD BEASTS

---

voracious; fighting with ferocity, and destroying all other beasts. The real inward character of the empire was not materially bettered by being a "beast" from what it was when it could be described as a "dragon." Its outward appearance, only, had been changed in some respects. Professed Christian Rome was ruled by the same power and authority, and from the same throne, for all of these had been given to the beast by the dragon. When the "heads" of this Christian beast had the diadems removed, there were found upon them "names of blasphemy." The Scriptural meaning of blasphemy is the arrogation of divine prerogatives or nature by man. "The Jews answered him, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (John 10:33). The pretending to be as God, and demanding the worship of others or claiming to exercise divine power, constitute blasphemy.

These were the notorious claims of the rulers of the empire from ancient times. Even the professed Christian emperors assumed to dominate the visible church, and by the authority of their office would assemble councils and dominate them. Earthly kings still strive to maintain the doctrine of "the divine right of kings," which is essentially blasphemous.

The inward spiritual unity of this beast, with all of the other governments which had preceded it, is clearly brought out in the description of its composite character. It "was like unto a leopard, and

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion." In the seventh chapter of Daniel we have the three world-kingdoms which had preceded the Roman Empire, described by the term "beasts." Babylon was represented by a lion, Medo-Persia by a bear, and Greece by a leopard. The characteristics of all of these idolatrous and pagan kingdoms are preserved and combined in this beast which represents the professed Christian empire beginning with Constantine. Contrary to the common notion that Christianity had achieved a mighty victory in its conquest of Rome, the Scripture reveals the fact that it had only played into Satan's hand and made a long stride toward its complete perversion. The true nature of the professed Christian empire could only be described by saying that it manifested, combined, the characteristics of the ancient, cruel, bloodthirsty pagan monarchies that had trampled down God's chosen people in the centuries gone by.

Babylon means confusion, and it is a remarkable fact that, in this beast of John, the particular portion of the lion that represented Babylon and was preserved, was its "mouth." The teaching of this composite beast would be Babylonian because it must speak with the "lion's mouth." It does not take long under such conditions for the religious world to be filled with confusion, and a modern spiritual Babylon established. He also manifested the cruel characteristics of the bear and the leopard. The ten horns which are component parts of this beast must necessarily partake of its life and true

## THE WILD BEASTS

---

nature. They are, therefore, all of them professedly Christian, but the same devilish spirit is incarnate in them and dominates them. They call themselves Christian nations, even at the present time, while they are drenching the countries with the life-blood of mankind. John gives a further description of this beast and his history in the succeeding verses:

“And *I saw* one of his heads as though it had been smitten unto death; and his death-stroke was healed: and the whole earth wondered after the beast; and they worshipped the dragon, because he gave his authority unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? and who is able to make war with him?” (Rev. 13: 3, 4).

When Rome laid aside her pagæn garments and posed before the world as a Christian nation, she was under her seventh “head” or form of government. This is the one that receives the death-stroke. This would indicate that this monarchy received a blow that ordinarily would have meant death to it. This occurred when the western empire was overthrown by the barbarians under Odoacer in 476 A. D. Ordinarily, Roman customs and laws would have given place to those of the conquerors, as was done when Constantinople was captured by the Turks, but it was not so at this time. Rome lived on. Its laws were not changed in any vital particular. The barbarian conqueror came under the spell of a mysterious power that is described later in the chapter, and he also professed to be Christian. This beast, which has so many satanic characteristics, and which received its authority and throne from

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

the Devil in the form of a dragon, continues its existence as before. The political catastrophe had no effect upon the character of the beast.

Religion was, after this, in a state of great confusion. "The whole earth wondered after the beast," and they worshiped the dragon and the beast. The worship was a mixture of paganism and the kind of Christianity represented by the beast. This extended throughout the "whole earth"; that is, the entire empire. Idolatrous practices were substituted for those of Christianity. Faith was divorced from morals, and the last trace of the primitive simplicity of the New Testament disappeared from the earth by 666 A. D. The authority of the bishop of Rome was largely increased by Emperor Justinian conferring upon him authority as "the head of all the Holy Churches and all the Holy Priests of God," in 533 A. D. By the year 666 A. D. the bishop had gained such power that he was not only the head of the churches, but he dominated the western division of the empire as well.

This was the stage when the "beast" was given "a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and there was given to him authority to continue forty and two months" (v. 5). Forty and two months equal 1,260 prophetic days, or 1,260 years. This is the period that is given unto him in which to pose in the role of divinity. It begins with 666 A. D., and will end, therefore, in 1926 A. D., when the mask will be torn from his face and he will stand revealed in all of his hideous, blasphemous nature. The oneness of the Papal form of govern-



## THE WILD BEASTS

---

ment with that of the other forms that preceded it is manifest, for it is professed Christian Rome in the form of a seven-headed, ten-horned monster that continues, after he commences his blasphemies, for 1,260 years. Every schoolboy knows that the Papacy was developed shortly after the downfall of Rome in 476 A. D., and has continued to rule over the kings of the earth ever since. It pretends to be a religious institution, but the seer of Patmos reveals the fact that it is nothing different from the political empire ruled over by professed Christian emperors and their pagan predecessors, for it is but the continuation of the beast, with all of its satanic characteristics. It is the same cruel, blood-thirsty, beastly power that had ruled from Rome during the centuries preceding. The essential difference that characterizes the Papal power is that it is guilty of outrageous blasphemies. The popes and the priesthood claimed divine prerogatives, and received from their dupes the adoration that was due to God and his Son. The usual formula of investiture with the Papal tiara was, "Receive this triple crown, and know that thou art the father of princes, and the king and ruler of the world." At the coronation of Innocent X., Cardinal Colonna, on his knees and in behalf of himself and the clergy, addresses these words to the Pope: "Most holy and blessed father, head of the church and ruler of the world, to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, whom the angels in heaven revere, and the gates of hell fear, and all the world adores, *we specially venerate, worship and adore thee.*"

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and there was given to him authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation. And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him, *every one* whose name hath not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain. If any man hath an ear, let him hear. If any man *is* for captivity, into captivity he goeth: If any man shall kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed. Here is the patience and faith of the saints” (Vs. 7-10).

Not only did the Papacy become a blaspheming power, pretending to be as God, but for centuries it ruled over the kings of the earth and over the consciences of men with a sway as absolute and universal as that of any monarchy that ever existed. The popes assumed the heathen title of “Pontifex Maximus,” that had been renounced by the professed Christian emperors in 375 A. D. Kings received their crowns from the Pope, and according to his will. During the centuries following 666 A. D., while the Papal power was in the ascendancy, the bitterest and most relentless persecutions were inflicted upon mankind. The most horrible and excruciating tortures that could be invented by the satanic mind were inflicted upon harmless and defenseless Christians. That long, dark night of Papal rule was made one of terror by the shrieks of unnumbered thousands of men and women and children as they were torn asunder on the damnable instruments of Romish torture or burned alive at the stake.

Laws were enacted by the councils, under the direction of the popes, that the work of extermi-

## THE WILD BEASTS

---

nation of the saints might be carried on systematically. In the fourth Ecumenical Council, Pope Innocent III. legislated as follows:

"Let the secular rulers be warned, and, if necessary, compelled by ecclesiastical censures to take a public oath, to do all in their power to exterminate heretics who shall have been designated so by the church. This oath every man shall be obliged to take who enters upon any office of civil power, whether the office be for life or for a limited time. And if a secular ruler, after due warning by the church, neglects to purge his territory from the filth of heresy, let him be excommunicated by the metropolitan archbishop and the bishops of the province, . . . and the Supreme Pontiff may declare the ruler's subjects absolved from their allegiance, and his territory open to seizure by Catholics, who shall possess it absolutely."

"Catholics who engage in a crusade for the extermination of heretics shall be granted that indulgence and that holy privilege which are bestowed upon Crusaders to the Holy Land."

"Priests must refuse the sacraments to such pestilential wretches [the rulers and officers who fail to exterminate heretics], deny them Christian burial, and scorn to take their alms and offerings. Should any priest act contrary, he is to be deprived of his office, and never restored to it without a special indult of the Apostolical See."

"We will, decree, and strictly command, that in the execution of these laws, bishops be diligent and vigilant. If they are not so, canonical penalties await them. Should any bishop be negligent or lax in purging his diocese of the leaven of heretical wickedness, he shall be deposed from the episcopal office and another put in his place who is both able and willing to destroy heresy."—*Letters to His Holiness, Pope Pius X.*, pp. 18-23.

These laws are interesting because they indicate the absolute sway of the Papacy as fulfilling the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

prophetic record of John. The Pope commands kings and rulers to carry out his will in exterminating all of those who worship God and do not accept the pretensions of the Papacy. With devilish cunning he wreaks vengeance upon every secular officer, priest or bishop who fails to kill. History reveals the fact that the Papacy did use the power that was given unto it, so systematically that probably fifty million of the saints have perished since it began its persecutions. The voice of the blood of the martyred saints cries out from the valleys of the Alps, and from all of Europe, to Jehovah for judgment upon this Satanical impostor in the form of the persecuting, blasphemous beast.

John makes a most startling statement concerning those who worship this Papal monster. All whose names have "*not been written* from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain," worship this monstrous power. The devotees of the Papacy are but worshipers of the modern Baal, and as such could not have their names written on the book of life. Protestantism has a fearful responsibility placed upon it to cry aloud to the millions of ignorant worshipers at the feet of the Pope, and warn them of their danger, saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her iniquities." The judgments of God will be visited upon the Papacy. It has led captive the nations of earth, and they have become slaves. It shall therefore go "into captivity." It has killed with the sword, and "with the sword it must be killed."

## THE WILD BEASTS

---

### Two-horned Beast

The prophet has continued the history of the seven-headed, ten-horned beast, from the time that he first saw him until he is killed with the sword, to indicate that all authority and power that is exercised from Rome is essentially the same, and is from the same origin. Paganism dominated the empire in John's day and was the antagonist of the woman and her seed at the beginning of her career. This religious system he identifies with the Devil and Satan. This pagan government became the professed Christian empire in 324 A. D., which ruled with all of the authority and power that was given to it by the dragon. It was essentially just as Satanic as was the dragon power that preceded it. There was only a partial change in its outward appearance. This form continued unchanged until the beast received its "death-stroke." This, even, did not affect the nature of the beast, for its wound was healed and it continued having the same nature during the centuries.

The prophet now reveals the forces that were at work, and that developed the earthly government into a blasphemous power of universal extent. A two-horned beast appears and is contemporary with the first beast after his wound was healed in 476 A. D. The origin of this two-horned beast was the "earth"; that is, it developed within the professed Christian empire. It was a religious beast, for it appeared in the form of a lamb. It would imitate the Lamb of God. Its power is exercised as if in the name of Christ. It speaks like a dragon. Its

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

teaching is pagan and devilish. This is the means by which it exercises its power. It enslaves the world through false teaching. It had two horns. These were the two divisions of his power. This describes, with all of the accuracy of detail, the religious condition of the empire between 476 A. D. and 666 A. D.

As early as 425 A. D., Valentin III. had decreed that all bishops of the western empire should obey the bishop of Rome. This decree completely established the supremacy of the Roman bishop. This supremacy was bolstered up by two claims that began to be made: first, that the apostle Peter established the church at Rome, and that its bishop was his lawful successor, exercising all the authority that Christ conferred upon that apostle; second, that when Constantine removed his capital to Constantinople, Rome and its territory had been donated to the bishop by him. Thus, his pretensions to both spiritual and temporal authority developed with the passing years. Another circumstance contributed to the development of these two horns. The incapacity of the emperors gave the bishops many opportunities in politics, even to treating with the barbarians who invaded Italy. Leo the Great treated with Attila the Hun, and kept him from attacking the city. Again, when the Vandals swooped down upon the city, Leo was sent to make terms with him. Gibbon describes the situation of this period in these words:

“Their temporal power insensibly arose from the calamities of the times, and the Roman bishops, who have deluged



## THE WILD BEASTS

---

Europe and Asia with blood, were compelled to reign as ministers of charity and peace ["looked like a lamb"]. The church of Rome, as it has formerly been observed, was endowed with ample possessions in Italy, Sicily and the more distant provinces; and her agents, who were commonly sub-deacons, had acquired a civil, and even criminal, jurisdiction over their tenants and husbandmen. . . . The rents or the produce of these estates were transported to the mouth of the Tiber. . . . The misery of the times had reduced the nobles and matrons of Rome to accept, without a blush, the benevolence of the church. . . . The misfortunes of Rome involved the apostolical pastor in the business of peace and war; and it might be doubtful to himself, whether piety or ambition *prompted him to supply the place of his absent sovereign.*"—*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. IV., pp. 47, 48.

Thus we have a brief description, by the secular historian, of the development of the religious beast until Gregory "supplied the place of his absent sovereign" and exercised "all the authority" of that sovereign. The bishops had deceived by their false claims to spiritual and temporal power, by their charities, by false miracles worked to impose upon the ignorant multitudes, until, by the death of Gregory in 604 A. D., the bishop was both the spiritual and temporal ruler of the western empire. It only remained now for this two-horned political-religious system to become thoroughly established.

### The Image of the Beast

"And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which it was given him to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell in the earth, that they should make an image to the beast who hath the stroke of the sword and lived. And it was given *unto him* to give breath to it, *even* to the image of the beast, that the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed" (vs. 14, 15).

The two-horned beast that looked like a lamb developed its power "in the sight of the first beast." That is, while the barbarian conquerors maintained a semblance of the Christian empire, the bishops were establishing a sway over the people that overshadowed that of the emperors. The real rulers of Rome were now the so-called successors of St. Peter. The secular form of government was not changed, but was simply adopted by the church. The church's organization conformed to that of the Roman Empire. It was patterned after the "beast" and became the "image of the beast." Westerman, a secular historian, bears testimony to this fact in language very similar to that of the apostle:

"In the system of the Roman Empire, as it existed after the reorganization of Diocletian and Constantine, the church found a model of efficient administration, the general plan of which it closely followed. A church state arose within the political state of Rome [*i. e.*, "the earth"], corresponding to it in its general divisions [an image] as follows:

### THE WORLD EMPIRE.

City-state .....	Municipal officials.
Province .....	Governor.
Diocese .....	Vicarius.
Empire .....	Emperor.

### THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH.

City-state church.....	Bishop.
Church province .....	Metropolitan.
Church Diocese .....	Patriarch.
Catholic Church .....	Bishop of Rome.

## THE WILD BEASTS

---

"Long after the Roman Empire had been shattered, its wonderful organization and the idea of the unity of the ancient world were preserved in the church. Long after Rome had lost its position as the political capital of the world, it still retained its pre-eminence as the religious center of the Christian world; and in the Catholic Church to-day the organization of the great Roman Empire, though somewhat changed, still exists."—*The Story of the Ancient Nations*, pp. 459, 460.

Placing the thirteenth chapter of Revelation and this testimony of Westerman side by side, we find that the prophecy of the seer of Patmos was accurately fulfilled in the established facts of history, and that the Papacy is the "image of the beast." We are now in a position to understand how the death-wound of the seven-headed beast was healed. It was through the connivance and power of the two-horned religious beast that it and the church were merged together under a common form of government, with the bishops at the head instead of emperors. Through the machinations of the clergy between 476 A. D. and 666 A. D., the empire, crushed by the barbarians, was completely revived. They had breathed into it their false divine claims, and it continued its life history in the Papal form. Forty-two prophetic months, or 1,260 years, is its allotted period of existence. This will come to an end in 1926 A. D., when it will be destroyed and no more curse the earth with its satanic machinations.

It was given unto this image of the beast "that he should both speak, and cause as many as should not worship the image of the beast to be killed."

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

How accurately have these predictions been fulfilled in the Papacy. The Pope has always claimed to speak with divine authority. He is the sole interpreter of the Scriptures, and when he speaks upon any subject related to faith and morals, he is infallible, according to his devotees. He even assumes to set aside the Scripture and substitute his own pronouncements. The history of more than twelve hundred years of Papal rule shows the complete fulfillment of the prediction that it is the purpose of the Papacy to kill all that do not yield to it. Space would fail us to mention the account of the awful persecutions that have been visited in the valleys of Piedmont, and against the Waldenses, and during the Inquisition, and against the Huguenots. The record is one of blood and horror. Nor has the Papacy changed its character. It is the same persecuting power to-day. It would put every Protestant in the United States to death if it could. As it is, the old-time hatred for heretics frequently bursts forth. During the year 1915, thirteen assaults with intent to kill were made in different parts of this county by Papal ruffians.

**Mark of the  
Beast**

“And he causeth all, the small and the great, and the rich and the poor, and the free and the bond, that there be given them a mark on their right hand, or upon their forehead; and that no man should be able to buy or sell, save he that hath the mark, *even* the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man: and his number is six hundred and sixty and six” (vs. 16-18).

## THE WILD BEASTS

---

Again the Papacy is accurately pointed out. It fulfills every detail of the prophetic description. We take a passage from "Corpus Juris," the official law-book of the Papacy: "If any one presumes to keep heretics in his house or lands, or to carry on business with them, he is to be excommunicated" (Decret Greg., lib. v., c-8). It is a statute enacted by the decree of the popes that no business be transacted with heretics, and it is the policy of the Papal government to bring financial ruin upon its opponents. The boycott is the club that its agents seek to use against men and institutions that are not subservient to them. In any community where there is a semblance of Catholic strength, this club has been used. It is held over the public press so threateningly that but few periodicals will dare breathe a word concerning the Papal intrigues which are being carried on to the detriment of the nation. Business men are being hounded by Papal beggars for the coffers of Rome, and if they do not contribute they are boycotted.

The "true and faithful" are designated by a sign or a mark that is placed on the right hand or on the forehead. It was a brand placed upon every one that was a servant of the image of the beast. The Papacy itself can tell us about the mark or brand that it uses to designate its worshipers better than any one else. We take from the Papal "Catechism" these questions and answers:

"Q. Why can we not receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders more than once?

"A. We cannot receive Baptism, Confirmation and Holy

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Orders more than once, because they *imprint a character* in the soul.

“Q. What is the character which these Sacraments imprint in the soul?

“A. The character which these Sacraments imprint in the soul is a *spiritual mark* which remains forever.”

The first one of the sacraments to be received by an individual is that of baptism, and, according to the teaching of the “Catechism,” a mark is imprinted on the soul that remains forever. It is a remarkable fact that it was not until after the establishment of the Papacy that any change was made in the manner of baptism. In 753 A. D., while in exile, Pope Stephen said it would be permissible to sprinkle water on the head under the circumstances under which his permission was asked, but it was not until 1311 A. D. that this practice became the subject of legal enactment. In that year the sprinkling of water upon the forehead became the legalized act of baptism, and, therefore, the means of imprinting the “mark” upon the forehead. If one does not receive that “mark,” he can not be numbered with the “Catholics,” for, according to their teaching, “baptism is necessary to salvation,” but the moment the “mark” is placed on the forehead, it becomes indelible and remains forever. It seems that some did not receive the “mark upon the forehead,” but on the hand. These, therefore, could not be classed as true Catholics, for they are required to receive the sacraments. This latter class are those who are the useful tools of the Papacy, though not actually identified with it. Their



## THE WILD BEASTS

---

hands are open with their gifts to the coffers of Rome.

The "mark" has also another significance than that already mentioned. It is "the name of the beast or the number of his name." This indicates that those who have the mark make open profession that they are adherents of the Papacy. The mark, also, is a number. It is the number of a man as well as the number of the beast. It serves not only to identify the worshipers of the beast, but it identifies the beast and points out the particular power that is the subject of this prophecy. John wrote in the Greek language, and the name must be determined by the numerical value of the letters of the Greek alphabet. The name that meets the requirements of this number is Lateinos, the founder of the Latin race: L=30, a=1, t=300, e=5, i=10, n=50, o=70, s=200. The total of these values is 666. This beast is a Latin beast. In 663 A. D., Pope Vitelian enjoined the exclusive use of the Latin language in worship throughout Christendom, and thus completed and unified the Latin church to begin the forty-two months of its blasphemous existence in 666 A. D.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

MORE than a millennium is occupied in the history recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. During this long period of years the "beast" and the "image of the beast" held absolute sway over mankind. During this time the Roman Empire, as a political power, disintegrated and became broken up into ten great divisions. Despite all of the catastrophe that overwhelmed her in this period, Rome never completely lost her supremacy as the capital of the empire. As her political power declined, a paganized religious power, having the same identical form of organization, developed in inverse ratio and dominated the ten divisions as effectually as if the empire had remained a political unit. These divisions still submitted to the authority of Rome as they did in the days of its political power. The lifetime of this "image of the beast" has already been determined. It is 1,260 years.

During the period of the development of the image of the beast, the church of Christ gradually declined as it disappeared in the wilderness, until, in 666 A. D., it was completely eclipsed and the light of the world went out. For more than eight centuries mankind was enveloped in impenetrable

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

darkness, and the Papal power was not questioned by any considerable or formidable group of men. It persecuted at will, and its blasphemies became more pronounced until, at the close of the fifteenth century, they had reached the culmination and the popes had arrogated to themselves all of the functions of God.

It was at this time that the supreme court of the universe assembled, as witnessed by Daniel in his visions (Dan. 7:9-12), and the decree concerning the Papal government was issued to be executed. The decree was to the effect that the dominion of the Papacy should be gradually lessened and consumed until the end (Dan. 7:26). The ten divisions would also have their dominion taken away, but not by a wasting process. The time limit given for the execution of the divine decree against the Papacy and against the ten horns was a "season and a time," or 450 years (Dan. 7:12). The series of visions beginning with Rev. 14:1, and continuing to the end of the nineteenth chapter, describes the events connected with the decline of the Papacy, and they cover a period of 450 years.

In chapter 14 the prophet is privileged to survey in outline the principal events that have to do with the overthrow of the apostate church, until its end is complete and the kingdom of Christ is established. This chapter serves the same purpose as the headlines of a newspaper at the beginning of an article. In the headlines, the most salient features of the article are briefly stated. In this chapter the most important events of the following 450 years are

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

briefly outlined, leaving the remaining chapters to fill in the details.

In the seventh chapter of Revelation we have an account of the sealing of the one hundred and forty-four thousand. This is not to be taken literally, for it is the mystical number representing the redeemed of spiritual Israel up to the time of the complete disappearance of the church in the wilderness, for it is said "to be the firstfruits unto God and unto the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4). They are more particularly described as not having been "defiled with women; for they are virgins." Spiritual fornication is the departure from the true faith and worship. "How is the faithful city become a harlot! she that was full of justice! righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers" (Isa. 1:21). These one hundred and forty-four thousand had preserved the true faith and Christian standards of living, although apostasy was prevalent about them. The special period of sealing is definitely marked as occurring while the four winds, or the barbarian invasions, were being restrained (Rev. 7:1-3). This extends from 313 A. D. until the invasion by the Goths, 410 A. D.

Now we have the answer to that familiar question, "Are the dead alive?" More than a millennium has passed by since the host of the sealed received their robes of spotless white. During these centuries truth and righteousness had been crushed to the earth beneath the heel of the apostate Papal power, but when the decrees of the divine assize are determined upon between 1453 A. D. and 1518

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

A. D., they lift their voices in a glad new song. A bright new day is about to dawn upon the world. None of those living had ever heard of Papal pretensions being seriously questioned before, so that the glad song of the redeemed, betokening the end of the night of apostasy, could not be understood by man. They stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion. The writer of the Hebrew letter makes this a figure representing the "church of the firstborn." "But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn" (Heb. 12: 22, 23). It is now a time of rejoicing for the church. The time of its deliverance approaches as the decrees of divine judgment begin to be executed upon the blasphemous enemy of the saints.

### Reformation

"And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he saith with a great voice, Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters" (Rev. 14: 6, 7).

The first shock that was received by the Papacy was that inflicted by Martin Luther and his contemporaries in the Reformation, beginning 1518 A. D. The events that characterized this mighty religious movement out of Rome accurately fulfill the prophetic details given here. The Bible was unchained and its precious truths began to be made

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

known to mankind. Luther boldly flung out the challenge to the world to worship God instead of the Pope. In 1520 A. D. he published the "Babylonish Captivity of the Church." This was the first serious attack upon the pretensions of the Papal imposture that had ever been made. Rome trembled and began to thunder forth anathemas against the intrepid messengers of the new era. Every effort was put forth to crush the rising movement, but without the success of former days. Here, decline had now begun as had been decreed by divine judgment. In 1648 A. D. the German Government recognized and supported the reformed faith by the conclusion of the Peace of Westphalia. The Papal dominion was definitely weakened by the multitudes who had renounced the popes and their pretensions during the intervening years.

**Infidelity** The next salient feature in the decline of the Papacy is found in the wave of infidelity that swept over Europe, beginning about 1750 A. D. and culminating in the French Revolution and the events following. The apostate church was unable to resist the mighty forces of discontent that seemed to gather in a great storm-cloud at this time. In 1793 A. D., France dethroned Catholicism and established the worship of Reason in its stead. In 1798 A. D., Pope Pius VI. was taken prisoner by Napoleon and carried to France. The prestige and dominion of the Papacy had received another crushing blow that it could not recover from. It could never inspire abject fear again.



## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

### Last Catastrophe

The voice of the third angel of doom is being heard at the present time. The year 1870 A. D. marks the end of the Papal pretension to temporal power. It was in that year that the Papal states ceased to exist, and the Pope's temporal power was limited to the confines of the Vatican. Here he secludes himself, pretending to be a prisoner. The civilized nations, however, still continue to recognize him as a sovereign by receiving his ambassadors at their capitals and by having accredited ambassadors at the Vatican. In the past few years there has been a steadily rising tide of opposition developing to his fraudulent claims. The voices of the apostles unite in a ringing declaration that the race will soon be freed from the Satanic claims of the age-old impostor. He himself lighted the fire that is sweeping the nations of the Old World with the besom of destruction, and which shall enwrap his own city with a seething conflagration. His dominion, as well as his followers, shall be engulfed in the great catastrophe that is shaking the thrones of the ten horns of the old Roman Empire. That secret concordat that the Papacy made with Servia will prove to be its own death-sentence.

It will be noticed that the third angel, whose warning is sounding at the present moment, announces the final judgment on the image of the beast and his worshipers. If the followers of the Pope desire to escape drinking of "the wine of the wrath of God," they should renounce the Pope's

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

authority before the final moment comes and obey Christ as their only Lord. The angel adds a peculiar comment to his warning. "Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (v. 12). The moment of the final destruction of the image of the beast is the signal of the victory of the saints. Patiently have we striven to obey the commandments of God as revealed in the Scripture, and steadfastly have we clung to the simple faith of Jesus as preached by his apostles, although the world seems to be rushing to ruin—heeding nothing but the blandishments of the apostate power. The significance of the angel's strange comment is that the suspense of the saints will not longer be delayed. As soon as the forces that were set in motion in 1914 A. D. have reached their culmination, the long-expected exaltation of the church of the living God will take place. This is confirmed by the voice that speaks from heaven at the same time:

<p><b>First Resurrection</b></p>	<p>"And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them" (Rev. 14: 13).</p>
----------------------------------	--

What reason is there for the blessedness of the sainted dead at this particular time, more than at any former time? What particular reference does the death-struggle of the Papacy have to the blessedness of the sleeping followers of Christ? It can be easily seen that it will be a blessed moment when those who are alive realize that they are free

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

at last from the power and abominations of the monstrous tyrant, but there would be no means of knowing why the dead should be especially happy at this time, were it not that the Scripture answers the question. There is but one event that can affect the dead in any way, and that is the first resurrection, which occurs when Jesus comes again. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and *the dead in Christ shall rise first*; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17). This, then, is the reason why "the dead who *die in the Lord*" are blessed now. The mighty miracle of the resurrection of the saints is about to occur and we lift our eyes toward heaven, "and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud *I saw* one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle" (Rev. 14:14).

The long-expected event is now occurring. There is the Redeemer coming again as he said: "If I go away, I will come again and receive you unto myself" (John 14:3). He is wearing a crown. He is coming as a king. He has received his kingdom and the dominion over it (Luke 19:15). The great voice of the angel out of the temple is heard as it echoes and re-echoes throughout the world. He is the angel of the seventh trumpet. He is also an archangel (1 Thess. 4:16). "The hour

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

to reap has come," and "the sickle is set forth into the harvest." It is the hour of the first resurrection. It is the time of the dead. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." All of them who "sleep in Jesus" come forth. The wicked dead are undisturbed at this time, for "the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished" (Rev. 20:5). Then the godly who are alive experience a marvelous translation at the same moment. "We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). It will be a most awe-inspiring spectacle. "Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left: two women *shall be* grinding at the mill; one is taken, and one is left" (Matt. 24:40, 41). The taken ones are Christians. The last follower of Christ has been translated, and, together with those who have been raised, is lifted out of and above the final tribulation of earth.

**Armageddon**                      The wheat harvest having been reaped, and the ripened grain having been stored away in the Master's garner, the time of the tares has come. The time of judgment upon those who have refused to "obey the gospel of Christ" (2 Thess. 1:6-10). The troubles of the time, as indicated in Rev. 14:17-20 by the gathering and treading of the harvest of grapes of "the vine of the earth," will be the bitterest that have ever been experienced by mankind. The

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

fruit that is crushed is gathered from the "vine of the earth." The "true vine" is Christ, and his true disciples are the branches, but this is the "vine of the earth." The fruits of the labors of all men who have sought to attain their highest good through earthly means and instrumentalities, alone, and not through Christ, will all be gathered together and trod upon. Political parties, rulers and kings will be humiliated, as well as those who have trusted in them or in culture, science or armaments. The fruit of this vine proves to be absolute waste. When it is crushed, the wine flows out as blood on the earth. The extent of this stream of blood indicates the bitterness of the calamity that has overtaken the world at this time. The entire fabric of earthly power is being rent and torn.

The church escapes the tribulation of this disaster to earthly power, for the grapes are trodden "without the city." The church has been removed temporarily from the earth. There will not be a single follower of Christ in the world during the battle of Armageddon. They were all changed at the time of the first resurrection, and had gone to "meet the Lord in the air." We have here a description of a period when the world will be without the church. The "two witnesses are slain and their dead bodies lie unburied in the streets." The evil propensities of mankind burst forth in unrestrained fury. The "vine of the earth," however, more particularly refers to the counterfeit of the "true vine." The Pope claims to be the visible manifestation or representative of the "true vine"

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

on earth. It is the ripened fruitage of that Papal system whose branches have become intertwined with all the political affairs of the nations, that is crushed in the winepress of the wrath of God. The result is a mighty stream of blood, a battle described as that of Armageddon.

Thus the prophet has prepared the reader for an intelligent understanding of the subject-matter in the following chapters of the book, by giving at once brief statements concerning the principal steps in the downfall of the Papacy. These are (1) the Reformation; (2) the wave of infidelity and the institution of the worship of Reason, as well as the humiliation of the Pope by Napoleon; (3) the great struggle between the ten horns of the beast, beginning in 1914 A. D.; the first resurrection and the translation of the living saints in connection with the second coming of our Lord; and (4) the battle of Armageddon.

**Another Sign** The subject-matter of chapters 15 to 19, inclusive, will fill in the outline with important details, explanatory of such events as may need amplification. Rev. 15:1-4 describes the rejoicing of the heavenly hosts in anticipation of the beginning of the systematic destruction and overthrow of the iniquitous Papal system that for centuries had held the human race in thralldom to its fraudulent claims. The events that follow this vision are identified with the affairs of the dragon and the woman, by the prophet's reference to the "seven angels having the seven plagues" as "another sign in heaven." At the



## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

beginning of the twelfth chapter we have the first "sign in heaven"—a woman arrayed in glorious apparel. Following this, we have "another sign in heaven"—a great red dragon. Now we have "another sign in heaven." This third sign is to bring the strife between the dragon and the woman and her seed to a culmination, for these plagues are the last: they "finish the wrath of God." These plagues are to be visited upon the power which has trodden down the "holy city."

These angels do not represent agencies of the church, for they come forth from the Holy of Holies, "the tabernacle of the testimony" (vs. 5, 6). They are spirit beings from the very presence of God to visit providential judgments upon "earth," which is now composed of ten divisions dominated by the Papacy. The time of their appearance is especially noted. It is following "the opening of the tabernacle of testimony"; that is, following the promulgation of the law of God to the world by Martin Luther and his colaborers.

One feature is to be especially noted in this connection. The moment of the exit of the "seven angels having seven plagues," "the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and none was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished" (v. 8). The temple was the place of intercession, and when the seven angels started on their mission of judgment, the time for intercessory prayer that the plagues might be stayed

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

was at an end, for "none could enter into the temple." It was a most foolish and senseless thing for the Christian people of America to heed the call to "pray for peace," issued by the President in 1914 A. D., for none can approach the temple until the plagues are finished. That is demonstrated by the fact that peace did not come in answer to the combined intercessions of the professed followers of Christ. God turned a deaf ear to their mockery of prayer; the war continues to rage with relentless fury, and the very participants in that intercessory spectacle are crying out for "preparedness for war." The war in Europe is the work of the seventh and last angel, and all the prayers of earth and heaven will not stay its ravages until it culminates in the complete destruction of the dominion of "the beast having seven heads and ten horns." Any cessation of this struggle will be brief. Before this plague is complete, America herself shall drink of the same cup of wrath. The extent of this plague which has been poured out in Europe is described by Jeremiah in these words:

"And all the kings of the north, far and near, one with another; and all the kingdoms of the world, which are upon the face of the earth: and the king of Sheshach shall drink after them. . . . And it shall be, if they refuse to take the cup at thy hand to drink, then shalt thou say unto them, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts; Ye shall surely drink. For lo, I begin to work evil at the city which is called by my name; and should ye go utterly unpunished? Ye shall not be unpunished; for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, saith Jehovah of hosts" (Jer. 25: 26, 28, 29).

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

These statements are definite and clear. All nations shall be visited by the sword, and shall drink of the cup of wrath. The Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem were visited, and that judgment remains as a warning that the nations shall not escape the wrath of God. Why should America be thought to be immune from the general conflagration? That nation which has gone pleasure mad and money mad; that nation which receives ambassadors from the Papal antichrist and winks at the political crimes committed against humanity by his minions—why should it escape punishment? God challenges the sober thought to the catastrophe that shall surely come. During the past two years America has been “drawing back and refusing to take the cup” that is presented her, but God’s word shall not fail. Intercession will not avert the impending doom, for “none can enter the temple.” But one thing can save America from the plague, and that is a genuine repentance and a whole-hearted obedience to Christ. “And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Even this will only avert the calamity as to individuals, and not to the nation as an earthly, political power. That must be broken and crushed that the kingdom of Christ may be established.

**First Plague** John’s attention is now drawn to the seven angels as they start out upon their mission of judgment at the command of a great voice out of the temple that is filled

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

with the glory of God, and that none could enter.

“And the first went, and poured out his bowl into the earth; and it became a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast, and that worshipped his image” (Rev. 16:2).

There is a striking analogy between the work of these, and the seven trumpet angels of the eighth and ninth chapters. Although they are different angels, yet both companies visit the same localities and the same territory (the earth), and in the same order. The judgments of the trumpet angels were visited upon the Roman Empire as an earthly, political government, while these angels visit corresponding judgments against the Roman Empire as separated in the ten divisions, but unified by the dominance of the Papacy. The first judgments are against Rome in the form of a “beast,” and cause its downfall, so the second series of judgments falls upon Rome as the “image of the beast.” As Papal Rome, or the “image of the beast,” is the spiritual counterpart of the political empire, so the judgments are counterparts and follow in the same order.

The details are explicit. The bowl is poured out upon the followers of the Papacy. “They that worshipped the image.” Some great internal infection manifested itself in a grievous, festering ulcer. It was confined to one spot, although its extent is not indicated. It appears in some part of the Catholic world after the “opening of the tabernacle of testimony,” or the Reformation. As the Papacy made a long step in its development when the bishop of Rome was declared to be “the head of

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

all the Holy Churches and of all the Holy Priests of God" in 533 A. D., it must, 1,260 years from that time, make a correspondingly long step in its decline. This establishes the date of the first catastrophe that hastens its downfall.

Beginning with 1750 A. D., the very heart of the Catholic empire became infected with blighting infidelity. The brightest minds of Europe were pouring into the streams of Papal life their most insidious poison. Among these men might be mentioned the names of Paine, Voltaire, Rousseau, Frederick the Great, Bolingbroke, Hume and Gibbon. The infection gathered strength as the years passed by, and brought with them increasing oppression and disregard of human rights until, exactly on time, in 1793 A. D., it broke out in the grievous and noisome sore of unrestrained anarchy. The property of the church was confiscated and used as the basis of national credit. The worship of Reason was declared to be the religion of France. So terrible were the experiences of that three and a half years that this period is known in history as the "Reign of Terror." Thousands and thousands of people were slaughtered, and the Papal religion and influence were weakened to a notable extent.

**Second Plague**            "And the second poured out his bowl into the sea; and it became blood as of a dead man; and every living soul died, *even* the things that were in the sea" (Rev. 16: 3).

The first plague affects the "earth," but this one, the "sea." It will have a larger scope than that confined to the ancient territory of Rome or

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

that controlled by the Papacy. Under the second trumpet we have found its fulfillment in the destruction of the maritime power of professed Christian Rome by the Vandals, so that the corresponding judgment visited upon its image must be of the same general import. The navies of the Catholic nations were vital to the maintenance of the fraudulent dominion of the Papacy. These were a constant threat to any people who might dare to renounce its authority. Spain was the first naval power, then, in order, Portugal and France. In 1793 A. D. began the struggle between Protestant England and the Catholic nations for the mastery of the seas. This continued until 1815 A. D., on every sea and in every clime. At its conclusion the Catholic navies were shattered. In this mighty contest, two hundred ships of the line were destroyed, and about four hundred frigates, as well as all of the smaller ships of war and commerce. From that time the navies of the Papacy have never been a threat or a menace to a Protestant people. Dr. Keith says: "The whole history of the world does not present such a period of naval warfare, destruction and bloodshed."—*Signs of the Times*, Vol. II., p. 209. Truly, every ship in the sea perished and it became as the blood of dead men.

**Third Plague**                    "And the third poured out his bowl  
    into the rivers and the fountains of  
the waters; and it became blood. And I heard the angel of  
the waters saying, Righteous art thou, who art and who wast,  
thou Holy One, because thou didst thus judge: for they  
poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and blood hast



## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

thou given them to drink: they are worthy. And I heard the altar saying, Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments" (Rev. 16:4-7).

The details given in this description are especially definite. It had already been said, "If any man shall kill with the sword, with the sword must he be killed" (Rev. 13:10). Any one familiar with the history of the Papal wars would know at once in what locality the just retribution for their murderous slaughters would be visited. In the valleys of the Alps, where the fanatical soldiers of the Pope had so mercilessly put to the sword unnumbered thousands of the saints, would be the only appropriate place where the Papal adherents could receive retribution. The attack upon political Rome was also made here under the third trumpet angel, so that the corresponding plague of this third angel against its image must fall here. The angel of the waters expressly declares that this plague is the retribution of divine judgment, visited because of the slaughters of the saints.

In 1796 A. D. the army of Napoleon, amounting to scarcely thirty thousand men, was hovering at the base of the Alps. With that brilliant courage that characterized him, that general led his small army into the valley of the Savonna, and vanquished an opposing army of ninety thousand troops. Here he separated the armies of Sardinia and Austria. He easily defeated the army of Sardinians and then turned his attention to that of Austria. Any one reading Mignet's "History of the French Revolution," beginning with page 326, will be struck with

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

the accuracy with which Napoleon fulfilled the plague of the third angel. His battles are all fought upon the rivers of the Alps. We find that the Po, the Adda, the Leck, the Rhine and the Bromidia are all mentioned as the scenes of his conquests. Within one year Napoleon had entered Rome and compelled the Pope to pay tribute in money, and also carried away such masterpieces of art as he chose. The Papal prestige was shattered by this defeat of Catholic soldiers. The thunders of the Pope will never excite such fear among men after that he was carried away a prisoner with such impunity by the spoiler Napoleon.

**Fourth Plague**            "And the fourth poured out his bowl upon the sun; and it was given unto it to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat: and they blasphemed the name of God who hath the power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory" (Rev. 16: 8, 9).

The pouring out of this bowl did not result in any calamity to the sun, but rather in increasing his light and heat and power. The sun is the brightest light in the heavens and dominates all of the celestial system of which it is the center. Until 1798 A. D. the Pope of Rome was the sun of the Papal empire. He dominated the kings of the earth according to his whim. His influence and power were greater than those of any other man. He was the center and ruler of the Papal system. When he was taken prisoner by Napoleon he lost his position as a sun, and that brilliant soldier became the most brilliant light in Europe.

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

As the result of the pouring out of this fourth bowl, the name and fame of the conqueror of Italy became increasingly brilliant. For twenty years he was engaged in ceaseless war. On May 26, 1805, he received the iron crown of the Lombards at Milan. Other territory was rapidly added to his empire. Europe was aroused at the successes of this mighty conqueror, and was turned into an armed camp. Within four days after Napoleon hurled his forces against the Russian and Austrian armies under the personal leadership of their respective emperors, they were cut to pieces and destroyed by this scorching sun.

As the armies of Napoleon marched through Europe they left a trail of devastation. More than two million men perished in these campaigns, and the field of warfare became a vast graveyard. In 1808 A. D., Pope Pius VII. was taken prisoner by Napoleon and the states of the church were confiscated. The emperor of Austria had also been compelled to renounce the title "Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and Germany." In 1809 A. D., Rome itself was incorporated with France as the second city of the empire. The Papal kingdom was surely scorched and withered by this burning sun, the "Scourge of Europe." When Napoleon was finally defeated, the Pope again returned to his capital to continue his divine claims and to demand the worship and adoration of his dupes. Aug. 7, 1814, this blasphemer again established the Inquisition and the Jesuits. Neither he nor his followers manifested any repentance by reason of the divine

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

judgments that had been visited upon his empire.

**Fifth Plague**                    “And the fifth poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom was darkened; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores; and they repented not of their works” (Rev. 16: 10, 11).

When the fifth trumpet angel sounded, the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke that came out of the abyss (Rev. 9:2). So when this fifth bowl is poured out, the Papal kingdom is darkened. The light of the Papacy ceases to shine with its former brilliancy. The power and influence of the Pope are lessened to a remarkable degree. There can be no doubt as to the locality where the plague is visited. It is “upon the throne of the beast.” The throne of the beast has always been the city of Rome. The term implies more than just the mere capital of his kingdom, for it includes his power and right to rule as spiritual and temporal sovereign.

In 1848 A. D. the people of Rome itself rebelled against the Papal power, and the pretended monarch was driven into hiding. He was finally restored under the protection of French soldiers. In 1870 A. D., during the Franco-Prussian War, France was compelled to withdraw its soldiers. Victor Emmanuel notified the Pope of his purpose to make Rome his capital, and on the twelfth day of September of that year the Italian troops took possession of the Papal territory. On October 2 of the same year a plebiscite was taken, and the

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

people of the Papal city voted overwhelmingly for union with Italy. Thus the very throne of Papal temporal power was removed. Nor was this all of the disaster from the Papal viewpoint. Liberty of worship was proclaimed. The gospel was preached again in the city where Paul was imprisoned. The Bible had been circulated. The worshipers of the beast rage and gnaw their tongues because of their powerlessness to persecute as of yore; because they see that with open Bible the age-old impostor is doomed and his waning prestige and power are about extinct. Despite the onward march of events, and the crumbling of its dominion, the Papacy still uttered its shameless blasphemies. The Pope, while pretending to be a prisoner, still claimed to be the vicar of Christ and the rightful sovereign of the kings of the earth. In the same year in which he was dethroned his infallibility was declared, and in the encyclical letters of his successors other shameless blasphemies are uttered.

### Sixth Plague

“And the sixth poured out his bowl upon the great river, the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way might be made ready for the kings that *come* from the sun-rising. And I saw *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, three unclean spirits, as it were frogs: for they are spirits of demons, working signs, which go forth unto the kings of the whole world, to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty” (Rev. 16: 12-14).

The results of the pouring out of this bowl are twofold. The first effect is felt by the river

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

Euphrates, while the second, though related to the first, is felt by all the nations of the earth. When the sixth trumpet angel sounded, the result was that a fierce race of Mongol peoples from beyond the river Euphrates started on an era of expansion to the westward. Like a mighty river, swollen to torrential proportions, the hordes of Turkish horsemen swept through western Asia and into Europe, devouring everything in their path. They captured Constantinople in 1453 A. D., and the last remaining vestige of the empire of the Cæsars became the territory of the Euphratean peoples. For three centuries it remained the strongest political power in the world, holding dominion over two-thirds of the ancient territory of the Cæsars.

The student of Revelation will have noticed that the bowl of the fifth angel was not poured out in the same locality that met disaster under the sounding of the fifth trumpet angel, but, instead, upon "the throne of the beast," or Rome. The reason for the exception to the rule, that the same locality is visited by the corresponding angel of the trumpet and angel of wrath, is historical. The disaster that came to the southeastern division of the empire under the sounding of the fifth trumpet angel was through a religious movement. It was not essentially political, but the Arabian locusts swarmed over the earth for the purpose of bringing it under the dominion of a false religion. Now, before the seven wrath angels started forth upon their mission of judgment, the religious and political dominion of the entire Mohammedan world was combined in



## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

one head, the Sultan of Turkey. For that reason the bowl of the fifth angel, which naturally would have been poured out on the countries overrun by the followers of Mohammed, was poured out upon the throne of the beast instead, making the judgment upon the beast more aggravated. This will be noticed in the fact that Napoleon dragged the Pope from his throne and confiscated his territory under the fourth bowl, while again (1848 A. D. to 1870 A. D.) the same thing occurs under the fifth bowl. The pouring out of the sixth bowl brings disaster to the entire Mohammedan world, because it is poured out on this Euphratean power that dominates the entire territory that was scourged by the false prophet.

We have, therefore, this situation at the beginning of the going forth of the angels of wrath: the territory of the ancient Roman Empire entirely dominated by two politico-religious rulers, the Pope and the Sultan of Turkey. Both of these powers trampled down the city of the living God, and both must therefore crumble before the judgments of God. Because of the fact that the bowl of the fifth angel was not poured out in the locality where it naturally would have been but for the reason above mentioned, the pouring out of the bowl of the sixth angel will be contemporary with that of the fifth angel. However, since the Sultan and the Pope are contemporary politico-religious rulers, whose common purpose is to trample down the truth of Christ, the judgments of God to be visited against both must be of equal severity, and their

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

decline would be contemporary. Now, since the sixth is the wrath angel of the Euphratean empire, his work will really begin at the same time that the first angel poured out his bowl upon the Papacy, that both of these antichristian powers might come to an end at the same time. His work will be especially noticeable following the judgment of the fourth angel, when the fifth bowl would naturally have been poured out on the locality ravaged by the Mohammedan locusts.

The judgment of the sixth angel is the "drying up" of the Euphratean stream that overflowed southeastern Europe in 1453 A. D. In other words, the politico-religious power having its capital at Constantinople will decline by reason of the judgments of this sixth angel, just as the politico-religious power known as the Papacy will be "consumed" to the end. The figure of speech, "drying up," clearly indicates what will occur. Just as a stream overflowing all of its banks begins to subside and dry up at the cessation of the storm, so will the Turkish power gradually waste away until it entirely disappears.

At the time that judgment was overtaking the Papacy when the first angel poured out his bowl, the decline of the Turkish power began. In 1774 A. D. the Turks were conquered by the Russians and were compelled to sign a humiliating treaty of peace at Kainardji. No further decline is especially noticeable until after the judgment of the fourth angel against the Papacy was ended in the overthrow of Napoleon in 1814 A. D. This begins

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

the period when the fifth angel would have poured out his bowl upon the Mohammedan power in natural order, but for the historical reason, and the sixth angel visits the judgment instead. In 1816 A. D., Servia won nominal independence from the Sultan. In 1823 A. D., Greece liberated herself, and became an independent kingdom after a war of three years. On Oct. 20, 1827 A. D., the Turkish fleet was destroyed in the battle of Navarino, and her naval power was gone. In 1844 A. D., the Ottoman Government was compelled to issue a "Decree of Religious Toleration" by the great powers of Europe. In 1849 A. D., Roumania won a nominal self-government. In 1878 A. D., following a war with Russia, the Sultan was divested of a large part of Armenia; Roumanian independence was recognized; the limits of Servia and Montenegro were extended, and Bulgaria was erected into an autonomous Christian principality out of territory that was formerly ruled by the Turk.

Following the signing of the Treaty of Berlin, England undertook the protection of Turkey from further inroads upon her dominion. But God had spoken through the seer of Patmos and through Daniel, and England, with all of her naval power, can not hinder the judgments of God. During the recent Balkan war Turkey lost almost all of her territory in Europe, and, in Africa, Italy stripped her of more territory. It requires no prophet to see that the bowl of the sixth angel will bring about the complete disappearance of the Euphratean power during the course of the great contest that is

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

taking place in Europe. England, the protector of the "sick man of Europe," has turned against him, as well as Russia, France and Italy. Turkey has no help in her hour of greatest peril except Germany and Austria. These will have increasingly serious troubles of their own as the war progresses, and by 1927 A. D., when her duration of existence expires, Constantinople, as well as Jerusalem, will be in other hands, and the atrocious Euphratean power will be but a memory. Compare Dan. 8:9-12 with Dan. 12:11. The first passage refers to the taking over of Jerusalem by the Mohammedan horn, while the second passage gives the time that Jerusalem shall be trampled down. The Mohammedans captured Jerusalem in 637 A. D., and the 1,290-year period would end in 1927 A. D., shortly after the end of the Papacy. God's word has been accurately fulfilled in the events already mentioned, and there can be no question as to the final disappearance of the Turkish power at the time revealed, as well. We leave for the future years to reveal the identity of "the kings that come from the sunrising."

**Three Frogs**                      The second result of the pouring out of the bowl of the sixth angel was the issuance of three unclean spirits from the mouth of the dragon, and the mouth of the beast, and the mouth of the false prophet. They are "spirits of demons, working signs." Again, the prophet alludes to the satanic character of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, in the fact that the demon spirits issue from them. The means by which these unclean

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

spirits accomplish their purpose is clearly indicated in the fact that they issue from the mouths of these satanic monsters. It is, therefore, the teaching of the dragon, and of the beast, and of the false prophet, vitalized by the three spirits. Through false teaching these spirits influence the kings of the whole world to engage in war. The identity of the monsters from whose mouths the spirits come is easily determined. The dragon, the antagonist of the church following 96 A. D., was paganism. It was plain, outspoken nature-worship, and in modern times would be represented by infidelity as well as by the idolatrous worship of the heathen world. It is outspoken against any recognition of God in the affairs of men. The beast was the successor of pagan Rome, and is therefore easily identified by the so-called Christian empire, beginning with the reign of Constantine and continuing, after its death-stroke was healed, as a beast speaking blasphemies for a period of 1,260 years. The ten horns or divisions of that professed Christian empire constitute the modern form of the beast and manifest the same jealous, cruel, destructive spirit. The idea of the divine right is the same principle in essence as that proclaimed by the emperors of Rome and the popes. This doctrine, that kings rule by divine right, and therefore instead of God, and that all of the rest of mankind are in duty bound to obey, still is the prolific source of the destruction of human rights. The false prophet is identified by the prophet in Rev. 19:20. There he is described as the one who wrought the signs



## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

in the presence of the beast, referring to the two-horned beast mentioned in Rev. 13:11-15. It therefore refers to the influences that changed the professed Christian empire into the Papacy. During that time men who professed to be Christian taught false doctrines, and so perverted the pure gospel. Creeds were promulgated, men exercised unscriptural power and meddled with political affairs until 666 A. D., when Christianity was completely corrupted, and, instead of the church of Christ, there was established a shameless counterfeit.

The modern form of this two-horned beast is found in the body of false teachers that occupy pulpits in the modern religious world. It would require volumes to describe all of the perversions of the gospel of Christ that are being constantly taught to the people at the present time. The crystallization of a modern ecclesiasticism, styling itself "The Federal Council of Churches," is rapidly occurring before our eyes. It looks like a lamb just now, but its real nature is being manifest in the ostracism of men who dare to oppose it. The priesthood of the Catholic Church, since the Pope was forever shorn of all temporal power in 1870 A. D., constitutes the exact counterpart of the false prophet. It is common knowledge that these false teachers insinuate themselves in all the affairs of government, poisoning and corrupting the well-springs of human liberty.

It is useless to identify in particular the teachings of these three spirits that are the inciting causes of a world war. They may be briefly summed up



## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

under three heads: Infidelity in its various forms, prevailing political doctrines held by the ruling classes, and false teaching of professed ministers of Christ in all religious bodies.

We are privileged at the present time to witness the miracle of the fulfillment of this prophecy concerning the three frogs. These unclean spirits incited a part of the kings to war. Suddenly, in July, 1914 A. D., war broke out in Europe without any apparent cause. None of the peoples of Europe had been insulted and wronged by any other people. No flag had been dishonored by any nation. A boy belonging to the common people of Servia shot and killed an heir to the Austrian throne. That was all that appeared on the surface. In a brief space of time the matter would have speedily been settled in the courts by the boy paying the penalty for his crime. There was absolutely no injury inflicted upon national honor or pride, such as is usually thought sufficient to provoke war, yet in a moment Europe trembled beneath the tread of marching armies.

A noticeable feature of this struggle is that it is a war between kings. There was no uprising or clamor of the people of any country for war. It was initiated and declared by kings, without the advice or consent of their people, exactly as John had foretold. The prophecy, as yet, is not completely fulfilled. The kings of "the whole world" must be gathered together. The war has already enveloped more than half of the world. No one can predict how soon it will involve the other half.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

The United States remains at the present time in the neutral role, but the presence of the three spirits of demons is plainly manifest in the extensive military and naval preparations being made. Attention is called to the events of the past two years, merely as a recitation of facts, and not in the spirit of criticism. The ruler of this nation called upon the Christian people of America to assemble in the various places of worship on the first Sunday in October, 1914, to "pray for peace." Since that time the spirits have been at work, and in the spring of 1916 the same ruler visits the larger cities of this country on a tour of speechmaking, for the express purpose of arousing in the American people a public sentiment for military preparedness. It will be noted that there was absolutely no demand upon the part of the people for larger armies or navies, but the demand is upon the part of the ruler. The tide will rise until this nation will surely be involved, as well as all of the other kings of the earth, for the time of the end is near at hand, and the Lord hath said that he "hath called for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth."

This war of the kings is not an ordinary war, as has already been indicated, but the gathering together is in view of the imminence of "the war of the great day of God, the Almighty." This will be more fully explained in Rev. 19:19-21. Many at the present time are asking what will be the end of the present titanic struggle. The seer of Patmos answers the question in the sixteenth verse: "And they gathered them together into the

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon."

The Second Coming of the Lord

We are permitted to live in a grand and awful time. We are witnessing the gathering together of the kings of the earth, one after another. First Austria and Servia, then, in rapid succession, Russia, Germany, France, Belgium, England and all of her colonies, Japan, Portugal, Turkey, Italy and Bulgaria enter the conflict. We do not know how soon or in what order the remaining rulers of the earth may be involved, for the Scripture has not indicated it, but right at this point John has inserted a parenthetical sentence of most solemn import. Before he mentions the place where the armies of earth are finally assembled, this parenthesis occurs: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (v. 15).

While the kings are gathering together, the coming of Christ is imminent; while the world is giving its attention to the mustering of armies, the King of kings suddenly appears on the scene with no more intimation of his arrival than would be given by a thief. It can be nothing but a solemn warning to mankind of this generation that the most glorious event of all the ages is going to occur soon, even before the battle of Armageddon takes place.

The seventh angel pours out his bowl upon the air, and, as he does so, a great voice out of the temple is heard, saying, "It is done." The final sentence is pronounced. In that brief statement is

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

comprehended the coming of Jesus and the temporary withdrawal of the saints from the scene of earth's conflicts. No child of God will experience the awful miseries that shall prevail on earth during the world war. The Lord mercifully removes them until it is over.

The seventh trumpet angel and the seventh wrath angel are either identical, or one may sound and the other pour out his bowl at the same moment, for they usher in the same events. This angel pours out his bowl upon the "air." It is easy to determine the nature of the events symbolized here. The air is the medium through which the light, heat and power of the sun are transmitted to the earth. Then, as a symbol, it signifies the medium through which kings and rulers transmit their power and authority. In times of peace, the authority and power of kings are exercised through the medium of civil officers, but in times of war the only medium through which kings exercise authority and enforce their will is their armies.

**Armageddon** Just before the seventh angel pours out his bowl the kings and their armies are gathered "together into the place which is called in the Hebrew Har-Magedon." The bowl of God's wrath is poured out on all the armies of the world. The scenes that ensue are frightful in the extreme. They are described as "lightnings, and voices, and thunders; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since there were men upon the earth, so great an earthquake, so mighty" (v. 18). The tempestuous storm of

## THE DECLINE OF THE PAPACY

---

battle rages in unprecedented fury, and earthly power is shaken as it had never been before. The spirit of militarism is so completely destroyed that it is not revived in the thought of any man until "the thousand years are finished" (Rev. 20:7).

In that great catastrophe, Babylon, described in the next chapter as the Papacy, meets her doom. All of the fierceness of the wrath of God is visited upon the religious impostor that has blighted and cursed the world for so long. The cities of the nations fall, and national boundaries are obliterated. There will be no earthly government at the end of that brief struggle, for "every island fled away and the mountains are not found." These denote states and kingdoms. Thus, through another series of visions, John has traced the rise, decline and fall of a spiritual empire as it struggled to overcome "the seed of the woman." The following chapters are supplementary, giving more complete details concerning the final doom of Babylon and the glorification of the church.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON THE GREAT

THE series of visions of the remaining chapters of Revelation are supplemental and explanatory. In Rev. 14:8 the voice mentioned the name of Babylon, and in Rev. 16:19, while enveloped in the mighty storm of God's fury, John had caught a momentary glimpse of the same city as she was crumbling to her fall. So rapidly did the visions sweep on toward their culmination in the overthrow of the Papacy, and that of the kings of the world who had permitted it to dominate them, that no explanation of the relationship of Babylon to the beast is given. Now that the prophet is fully assured of the destruction of all the evil powers that have opposed true Christianity, these supplementary visions are given that he might be able to fully understand what phase of the evil power Babylon represents, as well as the fortunes of the church after her enemies have been destroyed.

That these chapters give supplemental and explanatory details concerning things mentioned under the mission of the angels having the seven bowls, is made certain by the fact that it is one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls who invited John to gaze upon a special vision of the harlot



## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

woman. In that vision she is carefully described, and the mystery concerning her is made known to him. Again, in Rev. 21:9, "one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls" invites the prophet to behold a special vision of a pure woman, "the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

A comparison of the details given of the two women will reveal the blackness of the depths of depravity into which one has fallen, as well as the transcendent and spotless purity which the other has maintained. It will also help us to determine the identity of Babylon, a thing of most vital and practical import to the church. If Babylon represents an evil, so monstrous and shameless that all the heavenly beings combine in pæans of rejoicing when it is overthrown, the church of Christ and every follower of Christ should be anxious to avoid it and all connection with it. Let us notice, then, the contrasting features of the harlot and the bride.

"THE GREAT HARLOT." "THE BRIDE, THE WIFE  
OF THE LAMB."

(Chaps. 17-19.)

(Chaps. 21, 22.)

"And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of *the great harlot* that sitteth upon many waters" (Rev. 17:1).

"And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness: and I saw a *woman* sit-

"And there came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls, who were laden with the seven last plagues; and he spake with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee *the bride, the wife of the Lamb*" (Rev. 21:9).

"And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

ting upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns" (Rev. 17:3).

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls, having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations, even the unclean things of her fornication, and upon her forehead a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF THE HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (Rev. 17:4, 5).

"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. 17:6).

me *the holy city Jerusalem*, coming down out of heaven from God" (Rev. 21:10). (Bride and the holy city, the same under different figures.)

"And his wife hath made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints" (Rev. 19:8, 9).

"And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 12:17).

These two series of visions present two women in comparison and contrast. They are both described by the term "woman." Both are described as a "city." Each has characteristic raiment. Both are described as having children, the one called "the mother," and the other as having "seed."

The contrast between the two is striking. The harlot is as foul as can be conceived of. All of the time that John sees her she is in a state of drunken debauchery, groveling in the mire of deepest depravity. She is "drunken with the blood of the saints."

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

Not only does she present the disgusting spectacle of a besotted woman whose brain is crazed and reeling with the lust for blood, but she is a keeper of a doggery or tavern. She dispenses "wine." "And they that dwell in the earth were made drunken with the wine of her fornication." She overpowers the masses of mankind with the intoxicating and stupefying "wine of her fornication." There they lie about her with their brains stupefied and intellects deadened by the potions received from her hand. Not only does she dispense "wine" to the common people, but she carries on the despicable business of harlotry with the "kings of the earth." They are completely in her power and under her spell. They share with her in her vile sin. Through their overpowering lust she owns and controls them completely. Her clothes are not bedraggled as one would naturally expect. She has care for her outward appearance. She is "arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stone and pearls." Her adornment is gaudy, rich and costly. Her daughters are harlots like herself. She is also a city whose name is Babylon, referred to in the preceding visions.

The other woman, however, is the very opposite of this fallen woman. She is as chaste and pure as the angels of heaven. The wife of the pure and sinless Lamb of God. She was surrounded with the glory of God. Her appearance was lustrous "like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal." She was arrayed in a bridal gown of "fine linen, bright and pure." Her

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

seed is comprised of those "that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus." This woman is also a city, "the holy city Jerusalem."

As these contrasting characteristics of the two women pass in review before our minds, we are forced to the unerring conclusion that, while the women are the same as to form, they are the opposite extremes as to character. Then, whatever one may represent, the other signifies, but possessing a character of the extreme opposite kind. One is a woman divinely pure and chaste, while the other is the most satanically impure woman imaginable. One is the holy city Jerusalem, while the other is the idolatrous and abominable city Babylon. If one is a church, the other must be.

The Scripture clearly identifies the pure woman. Paul, in writing to the Ephesians, says:

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious *church*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; . . . This mystery is great; but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church" (Eph. 5:25, 32).

We see in this vision the realization of Christ's plans and sacrifice as they culminate in the marriage feast of the Lamb. A woman in spotless white, "made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." In Heb. 12:22, 23 the inspired writer identifies "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," as the "church of the firstborn," which is the church

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

of Christ, because he was the "firstborn from the dead."

This divinely pure and chaste woman is, then, the church of Christ, and the great harlot, therefore, can be nothing else but a church, an apostate church, reeking with corruption and drunken with the blood of the saints. The heavenly Jerusalem is the church of Christ, therefore Babylon is none other than a church that lures the kings and rulers away from the true faith of Christ into her slimy embrace. With the intoxicating wine of her apostasy she stupefies the reason and consciences of the common people. She sells indulgences to sin for a price. She releases souls from purgatory for a price. She furnishes charms, amulets and scapulars, supposed to protect the recipient from sickness and danger, for a price.

It is frequently said by the unthinking: "It doesn't make any difference what church one joins, for one is as good as another." That is a mistake. Here is a church that reeks with all of the abominations of earth, and who is a slattern tavern-keeper, making her followers drunk with stupefying apostasy. It only remains now to identify that church. The prophet is careful to give definite details, so that the simplest creature could recognize and avoid the contamination of her sins.

**The Mystery of  
Babylon**

"I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, *they* whose name hath not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast, how that he was, and is not, and shall come. Here is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth: and they are seven kings; the five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a little while. And the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition" (Rev. 17:7-11).

This is the divine interpretation of the mystery of the woman who has been described as a harlot "sitting on many waters and on the scarlet-colored beast." A mystery explained is no longer a mystery. When the interpretation has been given there can be no longer any uncertainty as to who the woman is, for she bears the identification marks.

Let us notice these in detail. First, the woman sits upon and is carried or supported by a seven-headed, ten-horned beast. John describes this same beast in the thirteenth chapter. There are some details given there which fix the beast's place in history. The particular one is that the beast was the immediate successor to the dragon. "And the dragon gave him his power, and his throne, and great authority" (Rev. 13:2). The dragon is described in the twelfth chapter as the persecutor of the woman, or the true church of Christ, following the first century. This identifies the dragon as the pagan Roman Empire. History, then, fixes the identity of the beast. Paganism gave its power and its throne and great authority to the professed Christian empire, beginning with Constantine. Rome



## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

was the capital; it was the throne that was vacated by the pagan emperors. The professed Christian emperors exercised all of the power that was exercised by their pagan predecessors. History absolutely fixes the identity of the beast and his place in chronology. He appears in that form in 324 A. D., and represents the Roman Empire as a professed Christian and earthly government.

Second, the beast appears in three phases during his life history as described in the thirteenth chapter. He receives a death-stroke in 476 A. D., when western Rome was conquered by Odoacer, the barbarian. This ended the first phase. The period during which the wound was being healed constituted the second phase of the beast's existence. During this period its political power, authority and influence were weak. When the wound was healed in 666 A. D. by the establishment of the Papacy with its capital at Rome, the third phase began. It is, then, a blasphemous beast. He opens his mouth to blaspheme; that is, to make divine pretensions. He makes war with the saints, and this was to continue forty-two prophetic months, or 1,260 years. This description is repeated under different figures of speech in the same chapter. In this second description the second phase of the beast's history is described by a two-horned beast that looked like a lamb. The outward appearance indicated a sort of religious form of government. It is said that he exercised all the authority of the first beast in his sight. The third phase is indicated by the image of the beast which was established

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

through the instrumentality of the two-horned beast. As soon as the image of the beast is made, all mankind is compelled to worship the image of the beast or be killed. It, then, is a universal world-power. History fixes the identity of these different forms or phases. We have previously called a secular historian to witness to the fact that the form of government of the Roman Catholic Church is patterned after that of the Roman Empire, and is, therefore, its image. This beast, then, during the three phases of its existence, is Roman. Its power is exercised from Rome as the center of its influence.

In the seventeenth chapter the beast is described in the same three phases. Under the first phase it is said of the beast that "the beast that thou sawest was." That was the period before he received the death-stroke. That was the period when the beast "was," or had an existence as an earthly government. The second phase is described by the phrase "and is not." This was the period beginning when the death-stroke was given and continued while the wound was being healed. During that period the beastly power was not exercised in the same degree as before. It now appeared in a religious form as well as political: it began to look like a lamb more than a wild beast. The third phase is described by the expression "and is about to come up out of the abyss, and to go into perdition." This is the beginning and the end of the third phase of the beast's history. In this description they that dwell on earth wondered when they beheld the "beast

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

that was, and is not, and shall come," just as they wondered when the death-stroke was healed, or the third phase began, in the thirteenth chapter. Therefore, the beast of this chapter is the Roman beast representing the earthly political power exercised from Rome in all its varying phases from 324 A. D. until the present time. The harlot woman, or the apostate church which was supported by the political power of the Roman Empire, can be none other than the Roman Church. History unchangeably fixes her identity. The Roman Church has always been supported by the political power and authority of the secular rulers of the Roman Empire, and of the divisions into which it was separated. The Roman Church has always used the secular power to carry out her damnable murders and persecutions. When heretics were to be destroyed, the secular rulers of the different parts of her domain were compelled under threat to do the dastardly work. She now tries to excuse her monstrous orgies of blood by claiming that she is not guilty because the political rulers did the deeds. As long as the secular power carried or supported the Roman Church, she was in the ascendancy, but when nation after nation refused to support her with their secular power, she fell into decline.

The prophet gives us an important note of time in this connection. The place of this vision in the prophetic chronology is determined by the phase the beast was in when John saw the vision of the woman. The beast was just about to begin

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

the third phase of his existence, "and is about to come up out of the abyss." The death-stroke was about healed. The beast had just about returned from the jaws of death. History fixes the date as about 666 A. D. Then, this also fixes the beginning of the life history of the harlot woman, or the Roman Church. It was about that time, or, to be exact, in 663 A. D., that the church was made a universal and united one by the decree of Pope Vitelian that worship in all the churches throughout the world should be in the Latin tongue. This is the historical starting-point of the Roman Church. Thus history and Revelation agree.

Lest some one be doubtful as to the identity of the harlot woman, John adds other identification marks. He calls special attention to the seven heads of the beast. They correspond in every particular to the beast of the thirteenth chapter, and therefore indicate that this was the same Roman power as described there, but when he gives two interpretations of the heads he emphasizes the identity so that there will be no room for doubt. "Here is the mind that hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." He had already described the woman as a city—Babylon. This city rests on seven mountains. The topography of the world determines what city it is that is built on seven hills. It is Rome, and no other. It is the "city of seven hills." It is the very heart, center and seat of the Roman Church. From the Catholic viewpoint, the church is separate and distinct from its membership. The great common herd is

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

characterized as the "children of the church." The church is different from its children. The church is that power which the children obey and recognize as parent. The Papacy, consisting of the Pope and the priesthood, would therefore constitute the church from the Catholic viewpoint, and from its very beginning the Roman Church sat on those seven hills, for that is the seat of its power.

Again, he interprets the seven heads as "seven kings; five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come." Turning to Daniel, we find that the word "king" is not used in a personal sense, but in an official sense, in which a succession of kings, or a dynasty, is denoted. That is what it means here. Each head was a succession of rulers or forms of government. This is confirmed by the statement of John that in 96 A. D. five of these were in the past, the sixth was the then present form, and later that it would be succeeded by a seventh. History fixes that as an absolute fact. Rome had been ruled under six successive forms of government to and including the time John wrote. These were (1) kings, (2) consuls, (3) dictators, (4) decemvirs, (5) tribunes, (6) crowned emperors, and then, beginning with Diocletian and Constantine, Rome entered under the last form of political government, the military emperors. Thus the Roman beast is again pointed out. The church which this beast carried was none other than the Roman Church.

Then, another identification mark is given. "The beast that was, and is not, is himself also an



## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition" (v. 11). After the seven forms of government end in 666 A. D., an eighth head takes its place. This eighth "is of the seven"; that is, it grew out of the seven and is a development of the seven succeeding forms. History establishes the fact that the Papal form of government succeeded the seven and grew out of them, and thus again Rome is identified, and with it the Roman Church.

This beast had ten horns, and these also become identification marks. We have already found that the term "horns" signifies contemporary divisions of territory, each ruled by an independent sovereign. The great political Roman Empire became separated into ten independent and contemporary divisions, each ruled over by an independent sovereign. John says that they had received no kingdom as yet, in his time. History confirms this. These divisions or kingdoms did not develop until after the fall of Rome in 476 A. D. These are said "to be of one mind, and give their power unto the beast" (v. 13). This is exactly what these ten kingdoms did. For about a thousand years they gave their power to the Roman Papal beast. When the Pope issued a decree to slaughter heretics, these ten kingdoms executed the decree. Their armies were at his service. All of their civil officers were but his servants, to do his bidding. The Roman Church is the only one that these ten divisions have supported and given their power to. The harlot and Babylon can, therefore, be no other.



## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

A sixth fact concerning this harlot church is that she "sitteth on many waters" (v. 1). The angel says that the waters are "peoples, and multitudes, and nations" (v. 15). The Roman Church is the only religious institution that this can describe. For a thousand years her universal sway over the thought and consciences of the nations was unquestioned. No king dared to disobey her.

The seventh identification mark is of a similar nature. "And the woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (v. 18). History again points unerringly to the Roman Church, as does Revelation. Rome is the only church or spiritual power that has reigned over the kings of the earth and dominated them according to its will. The word "earth" is used here as John always uses it, to mean the territory included in the Roman Empire, whose capital was Rome.

The change of attitude of these horns toward the woman confirms what has already been said. Prophecy says: "These shall hate the harlot, and shall make her desolate, and shall burn her utterly with fire" (v. 16). History says that this is exactly what has occurred. The nations have despoiled her of her dominions and confiscated her property until to-day she stands naked, shorn of all temporal power and support. One by one the countries of South America are writing into their constitutions the principle of religious toleration, where formerly only Roman Catholic worship was permitted. Mexico is in the throes of a bitter internal strife

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

for the purpose of liberating herself from the abominations of the Roman Church.

In this seventeenth chapter, therefore, there is a seven-fold identification of an institution that can be none other than the Roman Church. She fulfills every physical, spiritual and moral detail of the prophetic description. Even her finger-prints remain in blood that stains the pages of history. The harlot woman, or Babylon, is the Roman Church. As we have examined and compared the various symbols used by the prophet in describing a satanic, blaspheming, persecuting power that should arise, and upon which the wrath of God should be poured out to its total destruction, we have found what phase of this power each symbol especially designates. These symbols are three in number: a seven-headed, ten-horned beast, opening his mouth in blasphemies; the image of the beast; and a harlot woman, or Babylon, riding on the beast. When describing the Papacy as exercising temporal and political control of Papal territory and through the crowned rulers of the ten divisions, the symbol of the beast is used. When describing the Papacy as comprising both temporal and religious dominion, the symbol is the image of the beast, but when describing the Papacy as a purely religious institution, or as a church, the symbol is either that of the harlot woman or Babylon.

Rejoice, and shout for joy, all ye saints of God, for the doom of Babylon, that iniquitous, apostate, Roman Church, has the sentence of an avenging and outraged Divinity pronounced against

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

her. The sixth angel has already poured out his bowl. The stream of the Euphratean power, which was once a mighty, overflowing torrent, engulfing the nations of the world, has now almost disappeared from Europe. It but awaits 1927 A. D., its allotted time, to disappear from the galaxy of persecuting powers. The kings of the earth at the present moment are being gathered together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty. We only await the pouring out of the seventh vial for the final destroying power to envelop that corrupt, putrefying, Roman Church in its final and complete destruction.

The hour in which we live is fraught with the greatest solemnity. Millions of human beings at the present time are the devotees of that harlot woman, drunken with the wine of her fornication or apostasy. Stupefied by the intoxication of twelve centuries, they are all unconscious of the awful doom that awaits them. It is now that the warning of God ought to be thundered in the ears of every enslaved inhabitant of Babylon: "Come forth, my people, out of her, that ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." The time has come when every Roman Catholic ought to burst the slavish bonds of the abominable city, renouncing all allegiance to the arch-impostor that rules it, and come out to be a free man in Christ Jesus, for there is no escape for any who remain in the city any more than for those who remained in Sodom.

Other Scripture writers have written of this

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

Romish power. In the seventh chapter of Daniel we have a description of four great beasts, or world empires. History fixes the identity of these. The great empire of Babylon was the first one described as a lion. Then follow, in succession, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. History knows of no others. Daniel was especially exercised about the fourth beast which he saw. Ten times as much space is occupied in its description, and in the angelic explanation, as is given to the other beasts. It had ten horns. Its seven heads were invisible as distinct entities, for they were still in the future. In the midst of these ten horns there developed a little horn, or form of government. It had characteristics, peculiar to itself, and which identify it as this same Papal power. It "had eyes, like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things." History again fixes the identity of the power described, with unerring certainty. The ten horns represent none other than the ten divisions into which the territory, which regarded Rome as its capital, was divided. The Papal government grew up in the midst of these divisions and out of the same head. This Papal horn actually plucked up the Vandal, Ostrogoth and Lombard horns and converted their territory into Papal states, subjecting them to the absolute temporal power of the popes. Dan. 7: 25 and 26 gives us the angelic interpretation of the character of this horn. "He shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High; and he shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

given into his hand until a time and times and half a time. But the judgment shall be set, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end."

To give an account of the blasphemous pretensions of the popes, who constitute the recognized mouth of the Roman Church, as they speak with divine and "infallible authority," would be a repetition of things we have already given, and would only be an intimation of the abundant claims to divine power found in all of their printed utterances. The history of the world makes one shrink with horror from the revolting record of this Papal power, "wearing out the saints" even to this present time, when the murder of William Black, at Marshall, Texas, and the abominable outrages against human liberty being perpetrated almost weekly in the name of religion, are fresh in our minds. The same time is allotted this little horn that is allotted to the Papal beast of John, "a time and times and half a time." We have already found that this signifies three and a half prophetic years, or 1,260 years. The religious history of the world written by her own historians records the fact of her perversion of every ordinance and law of the church of Christ. The popes have dragged Christ from the office of Advocate, and exalted Mary and the saints instead. They have made Christ but a puppet, obeying the command of a priest to enter a loaf of bread. They have changed the ordinance of baptism from the illuminating symbol of death, burial and resurrection, into a



## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

meaningless sprinkling of water on the forehead, while the beautiful symbolism of the loaf and the cup has been perverted into pagan idolatry. Blessed be God, this little horn shall continue but his allotted time of 1,260 years, and then it shall give place to the kingdom of "the saints of the Most High" and it shall endure forever (Dan. 7:27).

Paul, also, describes this same power under the figure of the "man of sin." He explained to the Thessalonian Christians why they should not expect the coming of Christ in their day, by saying:

"Let no man beguile you in any wise: for *it will not be*, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God" (2 Thess. 2:3, 4).

Notice the details of this description. Standing in the apostolic period, there must come a "falling away," or an apostasy, from the true faith and the true church before the "man of sin" would be revealed. This apostasy began right in the apostolic period. "The mystery of lawlessness doth already work." The various warnings to the churches, as given by Paul and the other apostles, confirm this. There were incipient manifestations of the exercise of ecclesiastical power by elders who loved to have pre-eminence in the church. The religious history of six centuries is the record of the growth of apostasy from true Christianity and the complete establishment of the counterfeit temple of God in which the popes sit, mouthing their divine



## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

pretensions. None other than the Roman office of the popes fulfills the details of this prophetic description of the man of sin. Blessed be the merciful God, the office of pope will come to an end, and cease to exist. "The Lord Jesus shall slay him with the breath of his mouth, and bring to nought by the manifestation of his coming" (2 Thess. 2:8).

Thus all of the prophets who have spoken are joined by the secular historians in pointing to the Roman Church as the Babylon and the harlot woman, whose decline and destruction are being brought about by the pouring out of the bowls of the seven angels of wrath. With her, in her awful, final desolation about to be accomplished, will be involved all of those rulers who play into her hands and connive with her in her devilish political schemes, as well as all of those who are stupefied by her monstrous apostasies.

Thus, the name that is upon her forehead possesses the most solemn and awful significance to those Protestants who would have no connection with her in her sin. The name, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH" (v. 5), is the divine estimation of her character, and also of her relations. The Roman Church is not only Babylon, the mysterious city of confusion and idolatry, but she is the great harlot. She has exceeded all other like institutions in apostasy, for that is what spiritual harlotry signifies. (See Isa. 1:21, 22.) Not only is she

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

a harlot, but she is also *the mother of harlots*. Her daughters are harlots like herself. The women who have come out of her are apostate women. What an awful indictment of Protestant religious bodies who came forth from the womb of the apostate church. What a challenge to the enlightened conscience of good people who still preserve, in a measure, apostate doctrines and practices of their apostate mother. How gladly ought every well-intentioned follower of Christ to renounce all denominations and all forms of ecclesiasticism and follow the teachings of Christ completely. Because of the fact that God considers all denominations as harlots, the Federation of Churches amounts to nothing but an attempt to perpetuate apostasy, which is manifest in each of them. The modern form of "union evangelism" in which each harlot winks at and compromises with the apostasy of every other harlot, has a tendency to popularize and perpetuate the present departures from the New Testament faith and practice. The unity for which Christ prayed can only be brought about by renouncing forever all human creeds, human names, and conforming to the New Testament as the only rule of faith and practice. Federation is but a satanic plan to perpetuate the apostasies that are transmitted to the various sects from their mother, the great harlot, the Roman Church.

These marks of the beast are easily noted in all of the children of Rome. The true church of Christ was not known by human names. Her divine character rendered this impossible. If a church

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

calls itself by some human name, it has departed from the divine standard that far, and is guilty of spiritual harlotry to that degree, in preferring to honor men or doctrine or form of government more than Him whose "name is above every name." Some of these sects have preserved the Romish form of government, and use it instead of the simple form which Christ inaugurated. Some preserve the doctrine of "apostolic succession," which was invented by the satanic cunning of the Roman bishops; while most all use the substitute which the Council of Ravenna established to take the place of Christian baptism.

The great harlot having been described in seven-fold detail, identifying her as none other than the Roman Church and the mother of apostate churches, the prophet is now permitted to behold a series of visions giving information to supplement that given in the visions of the seven wrath angels, as recorded in the sixteenth chapter. If any one may have a doubt as to the rottenness and moral corruption existing in the Roman Church, he should give special attention to the inspired description of what was found as each angel poured out his bowl.

Verses 1-3 of the eighteenth chapter refer to the Reformation of Martin Luther. In 1520 A. D., Luther uncovered the rottenness of Rome in the publication of "The Babylonish Captivity," and Babylon, whose doom was announced in prospect, was found to be "a habitation of demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a hold of every unclean and hateful bird" (v. 3).

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

Verse 4 introduces the first plague that was poured out on the Papal power. This was connected with the wave of infidelity and the "Reign of Terror" from 1750 A. D. to 1793 A. D. This bowl was the first signal of the execution of God's judgments, and was therefore a premonitory voice calling to all of God's people to come out of her. As bowl after bowl is poured out, consternation reigns among those who had been enriched by her and had been engaged in merchandising with her. Among the articles of merchandise this harlot church had been bartering were the "souls of men." This unerringly points to the Roman Church. It is the church that invented the doctrine of purgatory, and to this day pretends to release suffering souls of men from that imaginary region of torment for a price.

As the Roman Church began to lose its prestige and power because of the succeeding bowls of wrath poured out, indicating the near approach of her doom, a strong angel, by casting a mighty millstone into the sea, pronounced the final end of the Babylonish apostasy. It will end in violence and be entirely blotted from existence. The act of this strong angel was premonitory of the final judgment of the harlot as the seventh angel prepares to pour out his bowl.

The solemn moment has arrived. The 1,260 years allotted to her are just expiring, and all of the angelic host break forth in one grand, triumphant song in anticipation of the triumphant victory of the pure, chaste virgin, that Christ loved and gave his life for. The four and twenty elders and the

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

four living creatures who abide in the immediate presence of Jehovah fall down and worship. Then, at the signal of the director of the heavenly choir, every divine being in the universe joins in the final chorus:

“Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth. Let us rejoice and be exceeding glad, and let us give the glory unto him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And it was given unto her that she should array herself in fine linen, bright and pure: for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints” (Rev. 19:6-8).

This corresponds in time to the parenthetical statement made in Rev. 16:15, and is premonitory of the same divine event. It occurs at the close of the mission of the sixth wrath angel. In 1914 A. D. we witnessed the beginning of the gathering together of the kings of the earth for the last great struggle, and John has revealed here the events that are transpiring at the present moment around the throne of God, but beyond the ken of human ear.

In the sixteenth chapter the prophet has revealed the gathering together of the kings of the earth “unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty,” but he did not indicate as to how they were aligned or who were to constitute the opposing armies. Now he is ready to give this information, also. The seventh trumpet angel sounds and the seventh angel of wrath pours out his vial, and then the events described in Rev. 19:11-21 begin to occur. Here we have given in clearer details a more complete



## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

description of the events recorded in Rev. 16: 17-21.

### The Armies of Heaven

“And I saw the heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and he that sat thereon called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. And his eyes *are* a flame of fire, and upon his head *are* many diadems; and he hath a name written which no one knoweth but he himself. And he *is* arrayed in a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white *and* pure. And out of his mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. And he hath on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19: 11-16).

We have here another white horse similar to the one that appeared at the opening of the first seal. There it indicated a victorious war, and it denotes the same here. The rider of this white horse and his armies will come off more than conquerors in the struggles which are about to ensue. The rider of this white horse is different from the one on the first white horse mentioned. He has a sharp two-edged sword proceeding out of his mouth, while the rider of the first horse is to be identified by a bow. This rider had many diadems, indicating that he was the king over many kingdoms, while the first rider had but one crown. The events described are, then, entirely different. The events signified by the first white horse and his rider occurred during the first-seal period, while the events symbolized here occur during the seventh seal and begin



## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

at the sounding of the very last trumpet of that period.

The wondrous rider of this white horse distinctly identifies the events symbolized here by his glorious and divine attributes. By a comparison with the description of the glorious one standing in the midst of the candlesticks in the first chapter of Revelation, we find that he and the rider of this white horse are one and the same. In Rev. 2:18 we find that the glorious one described in the first chapter is the Son of God, and he it is who is now emerging from the clouds of heaven "with power and great glory" (Luke 21:27), exactly as he himself had promised. He is now "revealed from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:7, 8). He is the eternal one, for "his name is called the Word of God," which in the beginning "was with God."

At this point the three parallel series of visions which we have been examining come to an end in one grand and crowning climax, the second coming of Jesus. In the first series of visions we have the prophetic history of the visible church of Christ that has never been dominated by the Papacy, and with its imperfections pointed out. At the conclusion of the Laodicean period this divine spectacle of the marching of the heavenly armies occurs. It is indicated there by Jesus knocking at the door of the church and announcing a supper (Rev. 3:20). So far as the visible church is concerned, the second

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

coming of Jesus signifies a calling out of a portion of its membership who will sit at the marriage supper of the Lamb, which is announced as ready in Rev. 19:7-9. These "called out" ones are those who give no heed to the voices of ecclesiasticism or denominationalism, but "hear the voice" of Christ. The daughters of the Roman Church have already been found to be apostate from the New Testament standards. Christ calls to his people through the pure gospel of the New Testament. "Whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 2:14). Those who sup with the Master at his coming will, then, be those who conform to the gospel of the New Testament and reject all the creeds and traditions of men. The great question to be decided by every church-member is, "Will I follow denominational leaders, or will I follow Christ?"

The second series of visions gives the prophetic history of the great earthly and political antagonist, as manifested in the various stages of the Roman Empire. So far as it is concerned, Christ comes to conquer it and subject all earthly rule to his own spiritual dominion. The third series of visions gives the prophetic history of the great spiritual antagonist of the church, as manifested in the devilish combination of church and state, appearing sometimes in purely temporal form, as in the temporal power of the Papacy; sometimes in a politico-religious form, and sometimes in a purely religious form, as in the Roman Church. So far as this insti-

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

tution is concerned, the second coming of Jesus signalizes its destruction. Then this divine spectacle betokens the gathering of the true church, the subjection of all government and rule to Christ and the total destruction of all spiritual agencies and means that are subversive.

This has generally been conceived of as a period of awful physical convulsions in which the worlds and suns would crash together and the universe would return to primeval chaos. This error is due to the use of language in a sense different from that in which the Scripture uses it. We must remember that these things are "sign-i-fied" and must be understood in their symbolic sense. Peter says, in speaking of the world of the antediluvian age: "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (2 Pet. 3:6). We know that the same physical earth remained after the flood that appeared before, only with changed spiritual conditions. A remnant of men and animals that lived on the earth before the flood were brought over into the earth after the flood. While following the appearance of the white-horse rider there will be the mightiest earthquake that it is possible to conceive of, it does not concern the physical universe, for it is the shaking and crumbling of the political earth. The kingdoms of the world will rock and reel as they are dashed to pieces by the mighty internal forces of dissolution. The downtrodden and the oppressed of every land, crushed to earth through the ages of the domination of the ruling classes, will at that moment be aroused to such

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

extremes of violence as the world has never witnessed before. The war which began in 1914 A. D. is the aggravating cause of the rebellion of the masses. The senseless slaughter of the world's laboring men and producers, with the enormous increase of national debts, will speedily bring about a condition that humanity will not bear. The premonitory rumblings are already being heard. The cry of the labor-unions, the socialists and the anarchists against the already prevailing conditions, will be but a whisper as compared to the mighty shout of outraged humanity which will arise ten years from now.

In that last great contest beginning about 1927 A. D., and continuing at intervals till 1972 A. D., the slaughter and the tribulation of the world will be inconceivable. That slaughter will not be inflicted by the weapons of the heavenly army previously described. The weapon of that army is the sharp sword that goeth forth from the mouth of the Son of God. It is not a carnal weapon, but is the word of God. Its slaughter is accomplished by the preaching of its truths, and this is not done upon the appearance of the heavenly army. The appearance of the Son of God on the white horse, and followed by his armies, was the signal for the beginning of the feast of the birds, announced by an angel.

### **Bird Feast**

“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, to all the birds that fly in mid heaven, Come *and* be gathered together unto the great supper of God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

mighty men, and the flesh of horses and of them that sit thereon, and the flesh of men, both free and bond, and small and great" (Rev. 19: 17, 18).

The symbolism of these verses is very simple, so that we can not mistake the events about to occur upon the announcement of the angel. A great divine judgment is to be visited upon the kings of the earth and their armies. They are now to reap the harvest of their own sowing through the centuries of their misrule. They are to be pounced upon by a mighty swarm of birds of prey and vulture-like birds eating flesh and carrion. The habitat of these birds is mid-heaven. Heaven is the place of power and the place of thrones, therefore denoting kingly rule and power. The birds fly in mid-heaven and can not, therefore, be classed with earthly kingdoms and governments. Their place is "mid-heaven." Birds, however, symbolize forms of government. When Peter saw the vision of the great sheet let down from heaven, he saw that it contained "fourfooted beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the heaven" (Acts 10: 12). Peter interpreted the significance of these living things when he said in the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." When the apostle heard the experience of the Gentile centurion, the meaning of beasts and creeping things and birds dawned upon him. They denoted "nations," races, or forms of government of all kinds known to the world.



## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

In this vision the birds can not be classified as being earthly governments, for their place of rule is in "mid-heaven." They are, therefore, powerful organizations of men in the midst of the nations, and that are hostile to kingly rule. The appearance of the Son of God at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the seventh bowl, is the signal for the gathering fury of labor-unions, and all other organizations hostile to the ruling classes, to burst forth. As a mighty host of eagles and vultures they will attack with one accord and will swoop upon all earthly rulers and rend their kingdoms asunder. It will be a struggle of labor against capital, the oppressed against the oppressor, the slaves against their masters, and right against wrong. The birds will be victorious and will despoil the thrones and feast upon the spoil of kingdoms. All the while this mighty struggle is being waged, the heavenly armies do not take part. They are onlookers. They await the propitious moment when, in the midst of the world's great tribulation, the kings of the earth and all mankind learn from bitter experience that Christ's law is the only basis of human happiness. The world's laws and methods have ripened into an awful harvest of misery and tribulation and have utterly failed.

The angel having made his announcement of the beginning of this period of warfare, the opposing forces are seen in battle array. "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse, and against his army"



## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

(Rev. 19:19). At the close of the mission of the sixth wrath angel, we saw the kings of the whole world being gathered together "unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty." This assembling began in 1914 A. D., and within ten years will be complete. The alignment of the opposing forces mentioned in Rev. 19:19 reveals the real meaning of the struggle of the European armies. It is a challenge to the *King of kings*. In substance, the kings of Europe are saying to Christ: "We will not rule according to your teaching. We are going to demonstrate that we can bring peace by military preparedness. We can bring in universal peace and the millennium by force and by treaty. We can bring about the world kingdom that is spoken of in the Bible, by compelling a concert of nations by the force of our dominant power. We will mete out justice in all the world through an international supreme court which we will establish to settle all future disputes between the nations."

This reveals the real meaning of the haste manifested in the United States to arouse the spirit of militarism. Christ's weapons are spiritual, but the rich men and the politicians are saying: "We do not need them; the only guarantee of peace is our army and our navy." So every effort is being put forth to enlarge our military and naval arms. Little do the young men who rush to enlist in the army and navy think that they are to be used against their toiling brothers when the "bird feast" begins in 1927 A. D. Little do the taxpayers dream that the armament which they are paying

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

for is to be used against themselves when they rebel against the unbearable burdens which are gradually accruing upon their own shoulders. Such, however, are the results that the prophet unerringly points to in the progress of present events.

The parties that make up the forces that challenge Christ to battle are named. The leader is the beast. We have already found that he represents the Papacy as a temporal, political form of government. It is true that the Pope has been shorn of his temporal possessions, but he still claims to exercise temporal sovereignty. All civilized nations recognize the Pope as a temporal sovereign. They receive ambassadors from the Vatican, and they enter into treaties with him, and these acts constitute an acknowledgment of his temporal sovereignty. The United States has in Washington a regularly accredited ambassador of the Pope. He even takes precedence over all of the representatives of the great sovereigns of the world. The legal status of the Pope is given in "The International Digest," compiled by John Basset Moore in compliance with an act of Congress, 1906:

"The Holy See occupies a position analogous to states, and the Pope is treated like a sovereign, and even as a privileged sovereign" (Vol. I., p. 16).

As a temporal sovereign, through the intrigues of his agents in all the world, he embroils the nations in the last great struggle. He lighted the match which caused the explosion in Europe. When the Servian people realized that the concordat

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

between the Servian Government and the Pope was in reality the bargaining away of their liberty to the monster of the Tiber, their indignation was aroused against all the emissaries of that ruler. When the heir to the Austrian throne appeared with all of his Romish devotion, an irresponsible individual, overpowered by the popular indignation, committed the crime which resulted in the war.

The United States is a fruitful field of Papal political intrigue. A few years ago Mexico, wearying beneath the Papal yoke, engaged in civil strife to relieve itself of priestly bondage. This country is now being used in which to carry out all of the infernal schemes that can be invented by a Romish mind against that afflicted country. New insurrections are planned by a cardinal and other prominent intriguers in New Orleans. Huerta, who had been driven from Mexico, was brought back to America and secluded in Brooklyn until it was thought the opportune moment had come to strike the blow. Pretending to journey to San Francisco, he started to his native country, but his attempt was foiled by his arrest at El Paso. The Papal agents are now busy inciting the ignorant peons to make raids upon United States territory in order that our army may invade Mexico and by force put down the movement to destroy the power of the priesthood.

Nor is this the end of Papal intrigues in this country. Romish teachers are insinuating themselves in our free public schools. The press has already succumbed to the tyranny of the Papal power. The army and navy are rapidly becoming

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

Romanized. The chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States is a servant of the Pope, as well as an associate justice. The Treasurer of the United States is also a servant of the Pope. Another servant of the Pope, a secretary to the President, is in possession of all of our governmental secrets. Through Papal intrigues with our politicians and lawmakers, human rights are gradually slipping from the people into the hands of Papal officers who have been elected on party tickets. These intrigues can lead to nothing but violence and rebellion by an outraged people when America finally yields to Papal dominion. For these reasons the Papacy, as a system of political intrigue, will be the most prominent party among the opponents of Christ. The Pope is very prominent in the public press to-day as having probably a chief part in bringing about supposed peace. If he had kept his apostate hands out of the affairs of the nations, the present war would never have been staged, and no peace can be brought about with his satanic connivance.

The kings of the earth are there. They have all been entangled with popish schemes so long that it would be impossible for them not to be there. The idea of kingly rule would long since have been nothing but a memory had it not been for the apostate teaching of the Roman Church. The Papacy and the kings are helpless without each other. The Papacy must be carried by the political power or else it perishes. The kings must be bolstered up by the apostate teaching of Rome or else they perish. They

## DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON

---

are like Siamese twins ; they must both live together or they must perish together. Of course the armies are there. They are the only means known either to the Papacy or the kings to accomplish their purposes. There could exist neither kings nor Papacy without armies.

The opposing forces are lined up in array against each other: physical forces on the one hand and spiritual forces on the other. Which will prevail? The seventh angel pours out his bowl of wrath, as recorded in Rev. 16: 17, upon these boastful armies; the oppressed of earth already being organized, as birds of prey, swoop down upon them, and the battle of Armageddon is waged with all of its fury. When the smoke of the battle has cleared away, the Papal intrigues will be at an end forever. The monstrous idea of absolute sovereignty which is represented in the Pope and the kings of the earth will have been completely blotted from the earth. The false prophet also goes down to defeat in that great struggle. The false prophet is here identified with the two-horned beast that created the image of the beast after the pattern of the Roman Empire as recorded in Rev. 13: 11-15. He represents the false religious teaching which made the Roman Church possible, and which perpetuated it after its creation, for he gave "breath to the image of the beast." It signifies, then, that at the end of Armageddon all of the apostate Papal dogmas and traditions will be blotted from the earth forever, as well as those who teach them. With these will be all of the other false doctrines that emanate from the

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

father of lies, to pervert mankind and lead them away from Christ.

The doctrines of kings having proven a failure in the final test, and the Papacy having drunk to the dregs of the cup of the wrath of God, and its false teaching being driven from the earth, it is now the opportune moment for the armies of the Son of God to enter into action. Only one weapon is used and that is the Bible. "The rest were killed with the sword of him who sat upon the horse." This signifies that a mighty revival of Christianity takes place at this time, and it corresponds to the resurrection of the two witnesses referred to in Rev. 11:11. Men have come to their senses at last, and have learned from bitter experience that their theories were wrong and that the teaching of Christ is the only true basis of character and life. They readily accept Christ as King, and a new order of things begins to arise upon the wreck of thrones and empires and the abominable apostasies of the old order.



## CHAPTER XV.

### ZION'S GLAD MORNING

THE world's night approaches the dawn of a new day, and the glorious sun of Zion's glad morning is betokened by the mighty victories being won by the preaching of the word of God, as indicated in the conclusion of the last chapter. The beast and the false prophet have both been defeated and have been cast from the world into a place called "the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone." Humanity will no longer be tormented or deceived by their apostate teaching. The Devil is now uncloaked. The beast and the false prophet being gone, he has no institution in which he may incarnate himself and deceive men longer. He is left in his true spiritual character as the enemy of God and men. He is taken prisoner and bound with a great chain, and he is "cast into the abyss," and it is shut and sealed over him, "that he should deceive the nations no more, until the thousand years should be finished" (Rev. 20:1-3).

A chain signifies anything that prevents free action. Error is sometimes called a chain. Love is a chain that holds its captives enslaved. Pride is also a chain that makes us slaves to custom. The law of our parents is said by the Scriptures to be

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

as chains about our necks (Prov. 1:8, 9). In this case the chain could be none of these things, but could only be the eternal truth of the living Christ, and its links were forged by the preaching of the gospel facts. As a result of this revival, the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled. "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9). The Devil is so strongly bound by the chain of truth that he is unable to disturb mankind for a thousand years.

The apostle, not wishing to interrupt the description of the judgment of the Papacy, waits until he has finished the account of its final doom before he describes the fortunes of the saints during that period. He now proceeds to give an account of an event that occurred at the time that the heavens were opened and the white-horse rider appeared.

### First Resurrec- tion

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection" (Rev. 20:4, 5).

Those who enjoyed the glorious privilege of this first resurrection are identified. They had been "beheaded" for the testimony of Jesus, and they had not been associated with the Papacy. Some would use the term "beheaded" in a literal sense

## ZION'S GLAD MORNING

---

and make these ruling ones as the martyrs, but it must be understood in a figurative sense, in harmony with the remainder of the book. Paul identifies those who have a part in the first resurrection and the time at which it takes place. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4: 16, 17).

The time at which the first resurrection occurs is, then, at the sound of the trumpet of the seventh angel, when the Lord first appears. The exalted ones are all of the "dead in Christ" as well as the Christians who are alive at the time. Paul gives additional information concerning this event in writing to the Corinthian Christians. "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15: 51, 52). The time is confirmed here. The resurrection will occur at the appearance of Christ, and it will not require a long time to accomplish it. It occurs in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. In the twenty-third verse of this same chapter he described these ascended saints as "they who are Christ's at his coming." He gives the further information in this chapter that these will be given spiritual bodies.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

We will not presume to speak of these spiritual bodies, for the Scripture has not spoken further than to say that they differ in glory (1 Cor. 15: 41, 42).

Jesus refers to the fact that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob shall be in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 8:11). He promised his apostles that they should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). Some of these apostles were not beheaded, John himself having died a natural death. Therefore we know that the term "beheaded" must be understood in a figurative sense. It describes all of the godly. Paul says: "Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (be "beheaded") (2 Tim. 3:12).

Before the great struggles described under the vision of the seventh wrath angel, this first resurrection occurs. The saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air, where, removed from the scenes of strife and turmoil taking place on the earth, they await the moment when the heavenly army enters the conflict with the sharp sword. In the meantime, a new factor has entered in the situation. With the downfall of the Turkish Empire in 1927 A. D., the way "for the kings that come from the sunrising" is prepared. Jerusalem, the holy city, will again be inhabited by its rightful owners, the seed of Abraham. God has not forsaken the Jew. Joel identifies the time of the return of the Jew to his native land with that of the gathering of the nations together for battle.

## ZION'S GLAD MORNING

---

### Return of the Jews

“Behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat; and I will execute judgment upon them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations” (Joel 3: 1-3).

The gathering of the nations began in 1914 A. D. The Zionist movement has been developing for some time, and it only remains for the land to be freed from the Mohammedan for the Jews to flow back to the Holy Land from the uttermost parts of the earth. This return of the Jews to their native land would be of no especial significance were it not connected with their release from bondage. God had warned them in the beginning that if they violated his covenant they would be punished “seven times” (*i. e.*, 2,520 years) for their sins. The primary beginning of their punishment was in 606 B. C., and would run to 1914 A. D. The next step in their punishment was in 599 B. C., when “all Jerusalem was carried away captive.” Two thousand, five hundred and twenty years from this date would run to 1921 A. D., when there will be a large influx into the Holy Land. The third and final stage in their punishment was in 586 B. C., when Jerusalem was completely destroyed. Two thousand, five hundred and twenty years from this date would run to 1934 A. D., the time for the third and final influx of the Jews to the land of their fathers.

These 2,520 years of desolation will have taught

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

them the lesson that God's covenants must be kept, and they return to the promised land in contrition for their past and ready for obedience to all that God might require of them. As they go up to Jerusalem rejoicing, they turn to Jer. 31:31-34, and discover that a new covenant has been ordained for them. No longer will they offer the sacrifices of bulls and of goats, whose blood can not take away sin, but the Lamb of God is the perfect sacrifice of the new covenant. They will accept Christ, whom they formerly rejected.

These Jews become the basis of the great world revival when the armies of heaven enter the conflict after the struggle in the valley of Jehoshaphat. When the King of glory shall come the second time to Jerusalem, the hills and valleys of that ancient land will echo and re-echo with the mighty hosannas and shoutings of all of returned Israel. Remembering their former treatment of him, they will make amends as far as possible by preaching the gospel throughout the world with burning words pouring from souls aflame with the love of Jesus' name. Paul, writing concerning the Jews, said: 'For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what *shall* the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?' (Rom. 11:15). And again he says: "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:25). The attitude of the Jews toward Christ and Christianity is only temporary and will



## ZION'S GLAD MORNING

---

disappear entirely by 1934 A. D., when the fullness of the Gentiles will be complete.

**The Millennium**      The glorious age so long foretold has now been realized in the kingdom of which Christ is King. It is that kingdom which Daniel spoke of when he interpreted the dream of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:44). It is the fifth great universal world empire, and its tranquility and peace shall be undisturbed for a thousand years. This is no idle dream of imaginary dreamers. The golden age of the world's history has been foretold by all of the prophets under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Peter speaks of it as "the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old" (Acts 3:21).

Man is once again in harmonious relation with his Maker as he was previous to the entrance of the serpent into Eden. Some indication of the character of that kingdom and of the conditions prevailing during that period may be gleaned from many Scriptures referring to it. The twelve apostles are upon twelve thrones. This would indicate that the teaching of the apostles will be the absolute law during that period, when all who were privileged to have a part in the first resurrection will have a share in the government. In the parable of the pounds, recorded in Luke 19:11-27, Jesus describes how this share is determined. He left his servants in charge of his goods, and upon his return, having received the kingdom, he calls his servants before him to give an account of how they had managed

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

his goods. Unto one whose pound had gained ten pounds, he said: "Have thou authority over ten cities" (v. 17). To the one whose pound had gained five pounds, he said: "Have thou authority over five cities" (v. 19). Thus the degree of authority which we will exercise in the kingdom will be in proportion to the faithfulness of our service in the Christian dispensation.

Isaiah describes the conditions prevailing during that golden age of the millennium, in these words:

"And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:6-9).

The beasts that are mentioned here denote nations, and the description denotes absolute international peace. No nation will attack another nor wrong another, and the reason is also indicated. The world is full of the knowledge of Jehovah. The Bible is the guide in the conduct of international affairs. If it were so to-day, not another shot would be fired, and every soldier would lay down his arms and return to mill, factory or farm. All national and racial differences would be forgotten and no hatred or jealousy would ever be manifested. Again the same prophet gives additional information:

## ZION'S GLAD MORNING

---

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for calamity" (Isa. 65: 20-23).

The average length of life will be greatly increased during the millennium, due to righteous living, but death will still enter homes as he does now. The most striking difference between the conditions of that period and the present time is found in the social conditions. No man will wrong his neighbor. Every man will enjoy the entire fruit of his own labor. This is the very principle for which labor-unions and socialists contend. However, they are striving to attain that condition, each in his own way, without any regard to the teaching of Christ in the New Testament, and can do nothing but bring disaster upon themselves and the world. If society would accept Christ and put his teaching into practice, the golden age would dawn now, as well as in 1972 A. D. Mankind must learn from bitter experience that God's law is the only true and safe guide to conduct, and therefore must pass through Armageddon and realize that the world-old idea that man can attain unto his ideals by brute force or without regard to Christ is false. In that age, what a man enjoys will be in proportion to his labor, for he will enjoy all of the fruit of his

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

labor, be it little or much. During that period a man will not labor in vain, as is frequently the case now. No calamity will come to sweep away the competence which has been saved by frugality and honest labor. He shall inhabit the home that he builds, and there will be no sheriffs to sell it under the hammer.

The rule of that period, while mild, will be absolute. It is described by the figurative expression: "He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron." Christ will not suffer his law to be broken. An indication of the method of law enforcement in that age is found in Acts 3:22, 23: "Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people."

**Satan Loosed** . . . At the end of the thousand years Satan is loosed from the abyss. No intimation is given as to why righteousness should wane sufficiently to enable Satan to escape from his prison-house at this time, but the moment his chain is broken he goes forth to deceive and bring about a rebellion against Christ and his people. The description of the events connected with this rebellion is important because of the plain statements it contains concerning the place where these events occur. This is a historical event which occurs on earth and not in some far-off world among the stars. "Satan shall be loosed out

of his prison, and shall come forth to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth" (Rev. 20:7, 8). The point to notice is that there are nations "on earth" at the close of the millennium period. The "camp of the saints" is on earth at the close of and during that golden age. The world was not destroyed in a physical sense when Jesus came, nor were the resurrected dead transported to some distant realm to spend their time in idleness. They were raised and clothed with spiritual bodies to rule in the world, one "over five cities" or one "over ten cities." Men live, love and labor during that period, have sunshine and rain, seedtime and harvest, summer and winter, exactly as at present. "They build houses and dwell in them: they plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them." The only thing that renders the golden age any different from the present is that the law of Christ prevails then.

The rebellion that burst forth at the end of the thousand years was of considerable proportions. Gog and Magog seem to be the principal disturbing factors in the rebellion. Ezekiel refers to Gog and Magog in Ezek. 38:2, 3. From his description we learn that Gog is the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and hence corresponds to the rulers of the Russian nation. Magog is the territory ruled over by Gog. It would therefore seem that it will be the descendants of the Russian people who will take the most prominent part in the attack upon the "camp of the saints," or the church, to destroy her if possible.

From Ezekiel's reference to the insurrection it

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

seems that the scene of the disturbance will be in Palestine around the very capital of the millennial kingdom. It will be of short duration, however, for the disturbers are destroyed and consumed, and the Devil was cast into the place called "the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone." There, in company with his former compatriots in iniquity, the beast and the false prophet, he spends eternity.

**Last Judgment**                      The moment has now arrived for the last great assize. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, says that the resurrection occurs in three separate stages. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then *cometh* the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power" (1 Cor. 15:22-24). Christ arose from the dead on the third day and is become the firstfruits. This is the first stage. At his second coming, "they that are Christ's" shall arise. This is the second stage. "Then cometh the end." This is the third stage. The time of this third stage is definitely indicated: "when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power," and made himself absolute monarch of the universe. "For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death" (1 Cor. 15:25, 26).

It is strange that some people imagine that death comes and takes away a loved one at the will



of Christ as a judgment against them, when this Scripture plainly states that death is an enemy of Christ. Death does not come at the bidding of Christ, for it is his enemy and is not controlled by him. He will not gain complete ascendancy over death until this third stage in the resurrection. When he shall have succeeded in raising the wicked dead, death itself is completely vanquished and its power is forever broken. Then shall death be "swallowed in victory" (1 Cor. 15:54).

"The rest of the dead" that were left undisturbed at Christ's second coming, as well as all of those who lived during the thousand years of the millennial kingdom and during "the little season" that followed it, now put on incorruptible bodies as they arise from all of the graveyards of earth and sweep in vast assembly into the judgment-hall of the everlasting God. The history of the universe will never record a spectacle fraught with more solemn consequences. The judgment is determined according to the deeds done in the body, and every one shall receive exactly according as his work shall be. Opportunities and knowledge and environment of the individual shall all be taken into consideration at this assize. Those who were privileged to have a part in the first resurrection are not concerned in this judgment, for "the second death hath no power" over them. It is, however, the moment of their eternal justification in the eyes of the universe. As a result of that judgment, death and Hades were cast into the "lake of fire," or, as it is called, "the second death." With them, also, were cast

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

those who were "not found written in the book of life." The overthrow of evil is complete.

### **New Heavens and New Earth**

As the seer of Patmos turned from the judgment scene, his wondering eyes fell upon a transformed universe. While the last assize had been progressing, the earth, having been purged of death and Satan and all of the forces of evil that have marred it, has been restored to a place such as man has never beheld. The conditions that were formerly known to the human race have forever disappeared, and, instead, there is found only that environment that meets the needs of a soul in its eternal state. We do not presume to describe the conditions indicated by the beautiful imagery given us by the enraptured prophet of God, any more than that indicated by the "lake of fire." We only await with eager expectancy the glorious moment when we shall have blessed fellowship with the saints in the new Jerusalem.

It is enough to know that the wonderful city and that blessed state will be in the transformed earth. There, amidst the scenes of our former conflicts and sufferings and sorrows, we will dwell eternally in heavenly bliss, and whatever that experience may be, we shall be satisfied. "And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of the throne saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men" (Rev. 21:2, 3).

The crystal stream of the water of life, flowing

## ZION'S GLAD MORNING

---

in the midst of the city, quenches every spiritual thirst, the fruit of the tree of life satisfies every spiritual desire, and the leaves of the tree guarantee against any spiritual disease that might ever attack the redeemed race. The glory of God fills the world, and all of his servants serve him.

### The Visions Cease

The wonderful panorama which swept before the eyes of the enraptured exile of Patmos has come to its close, and as the glimpse of the glorious conclusion, in which he sees the "saints reigning for ever and ever," fades away, the angel stands before him, assuring him that everything which he has seen in vision shall be realized in fact. Twenty centuries have passed by since that time, nations have struggled and fought with each other on the fields of battle, thrones have tottered and fallen, and mighty changes have taken place in the affairs of men since that notable moment. As we read the record of the unbelieving historian, Gibbon, as well as that of others, we are forced to realize that we have beheld a miracle more marvelous than any that was performed two thousand years ago: the complete fulfillment of every detail of the three series of visions in the order in which they were given until the present time. The Bible is then, unquestionably, a divinely given book.

As we witness the exact fulfillment of every detail of prophecy, in the mighty European struggle which began on time in 1914 A. D., we realize that the next event of certain fulfillment is that referred to in the last divinely spoken word in the Bible:

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

“He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus.”

May the prevailing ideas concerning the mysteries of Revelation be banished from the mind of every saint of God, and may they all come to study the simple truths that it contains, that faith may grow sufficiently strong to withstand the shock of the crumbling of the nations as the seventh angel approaches to inaugurate the kingdom of Christ in their final overthrow. May this study awaken in them such faith in the eternal verities of God's word that they may rely upon them with absolute assurance, and sound forth to the uttermost parts of the earth the gospel of the kingdom, with a fervor and zeal as in the days of the apostles, is our prayer.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

IT is fitting, before we close this volume, that some further explanation of the "times and the seasons" referred to in the preceding chapters be given, that the student may not be uncertain as to the reasons for stating that certain prophetic events will occur at certain definite periods. The time element is one of the most important considerations of prophecy, and is as truly of divine inspiration as is the symbolic description of the event to be fulfilled. Make the time element of the prophetic record uncertain, and you have rendered the predictive portions of the Scripture valueless. It would be impossible to be certain as to whether any historical event was the particular one that the prophets have spoken of, unless the time in which it was to occur was specifically stated or other information given that would show its chronological relation to other events, where the time of occurrence is given. Without the time element, the question of the fulfillment of prophecy is one that would always remain in the domain of speculation and guesswork, but with the definite time limits of its fulfillment set, the historical occurrence described in a prediction becomes the particular

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

event which must occur at the appointed time, or the prophecy has failed.

By way of illustration, it would be impossible to say for certain whether the war which began in Europe in 1914 A. D. was a fulfillment of that which was spoken in the prophets or not, unless that date is specially pointed to as the one in which the titanic struggle was to begin. Many disasters have been spoken of by the prophets as events to occur in the future. It would be a matter of mere speculation as to whether this particular event was referred to at all. It might fulfill every detail of the prophetic description, but still we could not be certain unless the time were given. The prophecy might refer to some similar war in the past, or to one that might occur as yet in the future. But if 1914 A. D. be the time limit set in the Scripture for the occurrence of the war, and it breaks out and continues in all details as described by the prophets, it is not within the realm of speculation at all, but in the domain of absolute certainty. Every sane mind must then realize that it is a complete fulfillment of the prophetic record, and the integrity of the Scripture is established. This is the need of the generation in which we live. The average church-member does not have a firm faith, an absolute, unshakable confidence in the statements of God's word and in the promises of Christ, for the simple reason that it is not built upon any truth that has received a divine demonstration in his own experience. The definite fulfillment of prophecy furnishes the divine demonstration of the integrity of the



## THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

---

Scripture which no sane mind can question or doubt, and the faith that rests upon the unquestionable fulfillment of a series of prophetic visions, exactly as predicted, is of a kind that will withstand all of the assaults of the inventive forces of evil.

This time element of the predictive portions of the Scripture has been much abused, and the misuse of it has no doubt been a very appreciable cause of the prevalence of the notion that it is impossible to understand prophecy, and that its interpretation is naught but speculation. An examination of this feature is, therefore, necessary. This prevalent notion, however, is largely due to careless reading of the Bible. There are two statements of Scripture that most scoffers generally refer to as their excuse for disregarding the writings of the prophets. The first of these is: "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matt. 24:36). The second is: "It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority" (Acts 1:7).

Both of these verses refer to the same event in two phases of its fulfillment. The first is the second coming of Christ, and the second is the establishment of his kingdom, which is connected with his return. To imply that because the day and hour of the second coming of Christ could not be determined, therefore the date of all other events foretold could not be known, although the prophet had fixed the time, is to read into the Scripture what Jesus did not say. It would make Jesus dis-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

credit Daniel, for he gave the date when Messiah should come. To read those words of Jesus as if they were true now and always would be, is but to make Jesus limit the authority of his Father, which he did not do. All that Jesus said was that, at the time in which he was speaking, no one knew when he would come again or when the kingdom should be restored to Israel. It was then a profound mystery, locked up in the mind of the Father. He did not say that God would not reveal, at any future time, the date of this glorious event. He said only that the time of his coming was not known by any one but the Father. If at any time in the future God should choose to reveal the time when his Son would come back to earth as King, it was his privilege. This God did. After sixty-six years John saw, in a beatific vision, the same Jesus receive from the Father the sealed book of the future. He saw the Lamb of God break the seals one by one until the secrets of the very last moments of time were laid bare. Then, no matter what was a fact when Jesus spoke, the further revelation of God has made it possible to understand now what was not known by angels, or even the Son himself, before his glorification.

The student of the Scripture will have noticed that where the element of time enters in, the Scripture writers are very specific in their mention of it. Notice how careful the author of Genesis is to mention the ages of each of the antediluvian patriarchs; how carefully he divides the creative period into seven days and distinguishes each of them by the

mention of the created forms that appeared on that day. For all ordinary purposes it would have sufficed to have mentioned the created forms in the order of their appearance, but the author specifically calls attention to the definite day upon which a particular form of creative activity was made manifest. The same minute definiteness may be noticed in his description of the circumstances connected with the deluge. We are told how many days the waters arose, when the waters began to abate, and the time of different stages in the abatement until the definite day in which Noah came out of the ark. This definiteness with regard to time is found connected with events that are symbolic in their nature. The very evident purpose is that the children of God might be guided by these notes of time in their understanding of the grander events that were prefigured in symbolical occurrences on a smaller and more ordinary scale.

### Time

Locke's definition of time is:  
"Duration set forth by measures."

These measures are of vast importance to humanity, for without periods of time of equal length, whether large or small, it would be impossible to relate events to each other. These periods are, as a rule, determined by the divine standards. The day is the smallest one of these periods of time; then come the week, the month, the year, the millennium and the cycle. None of these periods are established by man. God himself determined the length of the day, the week, the month, the year, the millennium and the cycle. It is beyond human power to alter

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

these periods in any way. The solar system measures off for us equal periods of time, and mankind must conform to its inexorable law. One revolution of the earth upon its axis constitutes a day. One revolution of the moon in its orbit around the earth constitutes a month. One revolution of the earth in its orbit around the sun constitutes a year. Seven revolutions of the earth on its axis constitute a week. God determined this in the beginning, and not man. The seasons are determined by the relationship of the earth to the sun in its annual circuit. The cycles are determined by the relation of the earth to both the sun and the moon as they move in their orbits. When these three heavenly bodies are in the same relative position to each other a cycle has been measured off.

Thus there is absolutely no chance in the matter of the measure of time. The periods are measured with infinite precision by the clock of the universe, the solar system. As duration continues, the sun and the moon mark it off into periods so unvarying that astronomers may determine the date of eclipses to the second, at any time in the past or future. The sun and the moon rule time and determine its periods absolutely. When God made the two great lights he said that the sun was "to rule" the day and the moon was "to rule" the night. They were to be "for signs, and for seasons," also.

**Solar and Lunar Dominion**      The system of times and seasons used in the Scripture is identical with those in the volume of nature, for these are all under the divinely

## THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

---

established solar and lunar dominion. Not only are periods of time marked off by these heavenly bodies, but they dominate all of the conditions of the physical universe that make life and the development of life possible. The sun, through the law of attraction, holds the earth in its orbit so that these periods of time can not change. The natural phenomena may all be traced in their origin to the dominion of the sun and the moon. Evaporation and condensation, and consequent rain, snow, dew and frost, are controlled by the sun. Heat and cold, electric and chemical changes are due to the influence of the sun. The phenomenon of the tides is witnessed in the perfect control of the queen of the night. In fact, all of those changes which are necessary to the development of all forms of life are directly traceable to the sun and moon.

Not only do these bodies dominate the changes in nature, but their influence reaches even into the domain of life itself. The relative position of the earth to the sun determines the various zones on the earth, and the consequent temperature and physical conditions of each zone, and no life can exist in any particular zone that is not suited by nature to development under the determined conditions. Thus we find in the frigid zone only those forms of life that are adapted to its physical conditions. We find that in different seasons there is a variation in the development of life. During the winter, development of vegetable life is impossible, but when spring comes, with its balmy winds and with its increasing heat from the sun, life begins to

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

manifest itself increasingly until the sun begins to recede, when the ripening period begins. Human activities are determined by the same dominant force. Our activities, as a rule, assume a different form with the changing seasons. It has been noticed that even certain diseases are prevalent at one season and not at another.

Even life itself is under the subtle spell of these mighty rulers of the physical universe. The sun and the moon fix absolutely the periods into which time is divided. The development of all physical life is made in successive stages that correspond exactly to the dominion of the sun and moon. In other words, the same periods into which time is divided by the sun and the moon, in their relation to the earth, are the periods that constitute different stages in the existence of all life. The primary period of time is the day, the hours, minutes and seconds being arbitrary divisions established by man. The next larger period of time is the week, made up of seven days. It also corresponds to one phase of the moon in its revolution around the earth. This seven-day period really becomes the primary unit of all time measurement, because it is determined by both the sun and the moon.

**Duration of Life**      The development of all physical life is separated into septiform periods, usually of seven days each, but sometimes of seven half-days each. The ova of insects are hatched in periods varying in length. The shortest period is seven half-days, as in the bee and the wasp. Some are hatched in just one week, while



others are hatched in from two to six weeks. In every case, however, the period of incubation is septiform. The egg of a chicken hatches in twenty-one days—three weeks of seven days each. The egg of a turkey or a goose hatches in four weeks of seven days each. The same septiform law governs the processes of utero-gestation in mammals and in mankind. In the human family it is forty weeks of seven days each from conception to birth. The menstrual phenomenon also recurs according to the same law in four weeks of seven days each. This same septiform law determines the various periods of human life. Here we find seven-year periods instead of seven-day periods. In each of these periods there is found a noticeable change in our intellectual and physical conditions from that which was seen in the preceding one. Even the very diseases which rage in the human bodies are controlled by this septiform law. Fevers have their crises on the seventh day and on the fourteenth day.

**The Septiform  
Law in the  
Scripture**

The phenomena of nature are controlled by this septiform law, as illustrated by the circumstances already referred to. If we find the same principle in the Bible, we will know that its author is identical with the Creator of the universe. It will also establish a further fact. There is not the element of speculation in the prediction of the astronomer that an eclipse of the sun or the moon will occur upon a specific date, even a thousand years in the future. The eclipse will occur exactly at the moment set, because the move-

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

ments of the heavenly bodies are established. They are beyond and above the uncertainties of human life. The determination of the exact date of an eclipse, a thousand years in the future, is a matter of mathematical calculation, and not of speculation. Therefore, if the same law that controls in the volume of nature, rules in the Scripture, the student of the Scripture will be able to predict the occurrence of future events in the movements of nations with as much accuracy as an astronomer does an eclipse in the course of the movements of the heavenly bodies. The astronomer, owing to human liability to make mistakes, may err in his calculation and the eclipse may not occur upon the very second which he had published, but this fact does not bring discredit upon the laws which control the motions of the heavenly bodies, nor does it invalidate the event itself. The eclipse will certainly occur at its divinely appointed time, even though the astronomer made a slight mistake of a few seconds or minutes as to the exact moment of its beginning.

It is true that men have made grievous errors in their prediction of future events in the movements of the nations, but this is due to the fact that the divine law which controls in these matters has not been the subject of the same careful elucidation as has the law of the movements of the heavenly bodies. These mistakes, however, do not affect in any particular the occurrence of the predicted events. Christ came to the world as a Saviour in "the fulness of time." He will appear on earth again at his appointed time, no matter how many mistakes

men may have made in regard to the date. Everything which the prophets have spoken will be fulfilled exactly on time. When the "fulness of the Gentiles" that Paul referred to is complete, their dominion will wane and the blessing of God return to the Jew.

It is just as vital to the spiritual well-being that we be able to connect divine events together as they are related to each other in point of time, as to connect historical events together in relation to the time in which they occurred. The notion that the progress of divine events is of no particular importance in the regulation of our spiritual lives, as generally presented by modern religious teachers, is a damnable heresy, contravening the teaching of Christ and the apostles, as well as contradicting the laws of nature itself. As we notice the sun go down in the west and see the signs of approaching night, our activities are affected. We cease our labors for the day, and, if on the farm, begin to care for the stock and perform other duties in view of coming darkness. The United States Weather Bureau issues a warning that a storm is developing in the Caribbean Sea and will sweep across the Gulf of Mexico in three days. Who would dare say that such a warning is not of vital importance to every ship-owner who goes down to sea, and that it would not affect their actions? Every captain begins to make such preparations as are necessary to protect his ship, his passengers and his cargo from the fury of the storm. If he did not, the world would call him a fool and a criminal.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

Then, who would dare say that the warning of the mighty storm of God's wrath sweeping over the world is not of vital importance to the child of God? Knowing the time of its approach is near, he could make such preparations as are necessary to protect himself from its fury. If he did not know the time, the preparation would not be made. This is nothing but common sense.

This same septiform law controls divine events as well as the things we have already mentioned. This is abundantly illustrated in the Scripture. The very first chapter of Genesis is the history of a creation week of seven periods called days: six days of divine activity and one day of divine rest. This same division is referred to in the account of the deluge, and was written on the tables of stone at Sinai. "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is a sabbath unto Jehovah thy God" (Ex. 20:9). The Mosaic system was typical of heavenly realities, so the system of times inaugurated at that time has a special significance.

Under this system the seven-day period is the unit or standard of time measurement. The next larger period consists of seven of these weeks. It is, therefore, a week of weeks, beginning with the Passover and continuing to Pentecost (Lev. 23). The next week in the ascending scale is the week of months, consisting of seven months (Lev. 23). During this seventh month the most important of Jewish religious exercises were to be conducted. The next notable week consists of seven years. It

## THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

---

had special reference to the land in which they should dwell. The record of its enactment is found in Leviticus 25. Six years should the land be cultivated and the harvest gathered, but the seventh year it was to lie idle. This seventh year is called a sabbath. Then the seventh day of sabbatic rest for the individual stood for the seventh year of sabbatic rest as applied to the land: a day for a year.

In the same connection another, and a larger, week is established. It consists of forty-nine years, or seven times seven years (Lev. 25:8). It was a week of weeks of years. The fiftieth year of this period was a great jubilee sabbath; thus, the seventh-day sabbatic rest of the individual represented the jubilee sabbatic rest of a nation in the fiftieth year. Thus, the ordinary day is made to represent a year when it applies to a country or when it applies to the national life. This jubilee sabbatic year was one of restoration and readjustment of social and commercial relations.

We find still another larger week mentioned in the prophets. Jeremiah mentions the seventy years of Jewish exile. This is a week of decades. This week is also the duration of man's appointed time. "The days of our years are threescore and ten." This week, as it referred to the Jews, was one of exile and bondage to the Babylonian world empire, and, as it refers to man, is one of bondage to the prince of this world in sin and death. We again find a still larger period of time mentioned by Daniel. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

people." This was a week of weeks of decades, or seven times seventy years. The length of this period had already been determined and symbolically made known in the establishment of the week of years. This period of which Daniel spoke concerned the people as a nation, and therefore a day stood for a year.

There is also the great dispensational week called "seven times" in Lev. 26:28 and in Dan. 4:23. It had to do with both the Jews and the Gentiles. For the Jews it meant a period of chastisement, while for the Gentiles it would represent a corresponding period of dominion and power. The periods assigned to the dominion of the "little horn" of Daniel 7, and the dragon, the beast and Babylon in Revelation, are each a half of this dispensational week of "seven times." This "little horn" had dominion given unto him "until a time and times and a half," or which is just the same as three and a half times, or half of "seven times." In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we have the church described as being in the wilderness "1,260 days," and also the same period of time mentioned as "a time and times and a half." Therefore, half of the dispensational week is 1,260 prophetic days, and the full week would be 2,520 prophetic days, whatever they may signify. Thus, this dispensational week that concerns both the Jews and the Gentiles in their relations with each other, consists of seven periods of 360 prophetic days each. This same septiform division is prominent throughout Revelation. There are seven candlesticks, seven churches, seven seals, seven



## THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

---

trumpets, seven thunders and seven bowls of wrath. The same divine seal is stamped on the Scriptures that we find in the physical universe. The times and the seasons in the Scriptures are an orderly procession of periods divinely established. Their duration is as fixed and as certain as the days, the years or the cycles measured off by the sun and the moon. Paul says that God hath "determined the appointed seasons" of the nations and their bounds (Acts 17:26), and man can not change them.

### Meaning of the Times

If the prophets have revealed the "times and the seasons," they belong unto us and they can be known as certainly as the motions of the heavenly bodies. "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever" (Deut. 29:29). If God has revealed the time of the occurrence of any event that belongs to us and is for our instruction, God has given an unchangeable law to test all prophetic statements by. "When a prophet speaketh in the name of Jehovah, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which Jehovah hath not spoken" (Deut. 18:22).

We will use this rule and apply it to a specific prophecy of Daniel. "Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks, and three-score and two weeks" (Dan. 9:25). There a definite period of time is given—sixty-nine weeks.

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

The date of the beginning of this period is given, as well as the end of the period. We can, then, be absolutely certain whether the prophet meant sixty-nine weeks of seven days each, or whether they were days on a larger scale. History establishes the date of the decree "to restore and build Jerusalem" as 457 B. C. Jesus appeared on the banks of the Jordan to be baptized of John and to be "anointed" with the Holy Spirit in the late fall of the year 26 A. D. The time that had elapsed since 457 B. C. was 483 years. Then, sixty-nine weeks equals 483 years. A simple calculation, then, shows that a prophetic week is seven years, and therefore one prophetic day is one year. This was what was symbolized when the week of years was established (Lev. 25:1-7). What had been but dimly revealed in the Old Testament is now made clear in its fulfillment in Christ.

Some might question whether this same scale was used by the seer of Patmos. This is a point that may be definitely settled so that there can be no mistake. The duration of the life history of the beast as a blasphemous power is given as "forty-two months," or the same as 1,260 prophetic days. Time enough has now elapsed to determine the absolute meaning of that expression. Naturally, the appearance of a mighty apostasy like the Papacy would not occur in one year, but such an institution would require decades and centuries in the process of its development before it could be completely established. Likewise, its end would not come in a particular year. It would naturally decline in

## THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

---

successive stages corresponding to those of its development. Then, we have found a simple rule to guide us in determining whether the 1,260 prophetic days mean 1,260 years or not.

From the primary beginning of the Papacy to the first completed stage of its decline would be the period of its appointed life history, or 1,260 prophetic days. From each succeeding stage in its development to the corresponding stage of its decline would be 1,260 days, and from the date of its complete development as the Papal power until its complete destruction would be also 1,260 prophetic days.

The primary beginning of the Papacy may be traced to the Nicean Council, 325 A. D. While the spirit of apostasy was at work in Paul's day, it was not manifest in a visible, organized form until the above-mentioned council. There we find, for the first time, the wedlock of the church and state. The church has forsaken her true Lord and is now associating with the state. The bishops assemble at the call of Constantine. The first creed is promulgated and the church is never the same after that. Then, if 1,260 prophetic days are equal to 1,260 years, we will find that 1585 A. D. will be connected in some way with the first completed stage of Papal decline. Gregory XIII. died in 1585 A. D. That in itself would not be of especial significance but for the facts connected with his life, as the "mouth of the little horn." According to the prophecy of Daniel, "he would think to change laws, and the times and seasons would be

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

given into his hand." The council at Nice had legislated in regard to the time when Easter was to be observed. Gregory XIII. arbitrarily decreed that ten days be removed from the calendar in order to cure an error of nine days and a half that had accrued since 325 A. D. He is therefore the one who changed "the times and the law," and represents the fullest and complete fulfillment of the work of the "little horn." The end of his reign would mark the completion of the first stage of the decline of the Papacy, for it was during his reign that the Reformation was finally established by the "edict of pacification with the Protestants."

Another important date in the development of the Papacy is 533 A. D. This was the year that Justinian decreed that the bishop of Rome was the "head of all the Holy Churches." This gave the apostasy a tremendous impetus. Then, in 1,260 years there ought to be another notable stage in the decline of the Papacy. History shows what occurred. The "Reign of Terror," otherwise known as the French Revolution, began, which resulted in the abolishment of religion and in taking the Pope a prisoner to France. Thus we have seen that the 1,260 prophetic days that mark the duration of the beast are 1,260 years, or a day for a year.

The regular elapse of 1,260 years between corresponding stages in the rise and decline of the Papacy determines the rule that a day stands for a year. This rule may be illustrated in the following manner, and the illustration will also show when the last great catastrophe will overtake the Papacy:

## THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

---

Council of Nice.	1,260 years.	Death of Gregory XIII.
325 A. D.		1585 A. D.
Justinian's Decree.	1,260 years.	Reign of Terror.
533 A. D.		1793 A. D.
Latin Worship.	1,260 years.	Further Decline.
668 A. D.		1923 A. D.
Papacy Complete.	1,260 years.	Death-stroke.
666 A. D.		1926 A. D.

### Seven Times

Having determined that Daniel and John use a day to represent a year, we now turn to the prophecies whose fulfillment is indicated as taking place in this generation. The first of these is the dispensation week of "seven times"—2,520 years. In the second chapter of Daniel we have a symbolic description of the future history of earthly governments under the figure of a great image composed of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay. Daniel interprets the vision so there is no uncertainty as to its meaning. In the fourth chapter we have another vision, a mate to the vision of the image. It therefore represents the history of the same earthly governments during the same period. One of the details of this vision is the statement that Nebuchadnezzar, who in his person represented the four great world kingdoms, symbolized as one tree, would have his heart changed from a man's and have a beast's heart given. This indicated the character of these earthly governments which he as an individual represented. They would be cruel and beastly for 2,520 years. It was also said that at the end of the seven times he would acknowledge that the "Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men"; in other words, that at the end of 2,520 years these earthly governments would

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

come to know that God was the ruler and that they would yield to his authority. This 2,520 years is the period of existence, therefore, of the Gentile governments. This period was to begin with Nebuchadnezzar, for he represented them. He was the head of gold in the first vision, and his kingdom is said to be the first kingdom. The other empires arose afterward. The very madness was visited upon Nebuchadnezzar in parable, on a smaller scale. So, then, this dispensational week must have its beginning in the reign of that monarch.

Another reference to this "seven times" is found in Lev. 26:14-33. Here the Jews are warned that they would be punished "seven times" for their sins. The punishment is indicated by the fact that their land would be a desolation, that their enemies would dwell in the land, and that they would be scattered among the nations. This week is therefore connected with both Nebuchadnezzar, as the representative of the Gentile governments, and the Jews. History furnishes the record. Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem in 606 B. C. A few of the prominent men were carried away at this time. Jehoiakim was left to reign as a vassal of Babylon. He rebelled after three and a half years and attempted to free the Jewish people. Nebuchadnezzar came again, and in 599 B. C. he carried the people away captive and despoiled the temple of its golden vessels. Again, eleven years afterward, Jerusalem was besieged, and the desolation of the land was complete in 586 B. C. From those days



## THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

---

until the present, the Jews have been scattered among all nations, as God had said. The primary beginning of this great week was 606 B. C., when Jerusalem was captured and the Jewish king made a vassal. The development of the dispensational week may be illustrated in the following manner:

Capture of Jerusalem.	2,520 years.	Beginning of End of Gentile Nations.	1914 A. D.
806 B. C.			
Captivity of the Jews.	2,520 years.	World-wide War Among the Nations.	1921 A. D.
599 B. C.			
Desolation of Jews Complete	2,520 years.	Downfall of the Gen- tile Nations.	1934 A. D.
586 B. C.			

### The Grecian "Little Horn"

In the eighth chapter of Daniel we have another "little horn" which developed out of a "he-goat" that is identified as the Grecian Empire (Dan. 8:21). This desolating horn carried on his depredations principally against the sanctuary. He "waxed exceeding great, toward the south, and toward the east, and toward the glorious *land*. And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven: and some of the host and of the stars it cast down to the ground, and trampled upon them. Yea, it magnified itself, even to the prince of the host; and it took away from him the continual *burnt-offering*, and the place of the sanctuary was cast down" (Dan. 8:9-11).

The Grecian Empire was continually bringing desolation to the sanctuary of the Jews. In the wars of Antiochus Epiphanes, from 175 B. C. to 168 B. C., the temple was plundered and dedicated

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

to Jupiter Olympus. The duration of this desolating power would be twenty-three hundred "evenings and mornings," an expression conveying the idea of days, as in the first chapter of Genesis. The Grecian Empire became a world power under Alexander the Great in 328 B. C. Twenty-three hundred years from this date is 1972 A. D. The desolations wrought by this "little horn" were to come to pass in the "latter part of the kingdom" (v. 23). This horn understands "dark sentences." He deals in sayings that are dark and mysterious. The tenth, eleventh and twelfth chapters have to do with Daniel's desire to understand the vision of the "little horn" and the angelic interpretation. Beginning with Dan. 11:21, we find the angel giving fuller details concerning this "little horn," so that his fulfillment is found in the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Mohammedans in 637 A. D. This was the time that the "abomination of desolation," referred to by Jesus, was set up in Jerusalem. From that time the holy mountain has been in Mohammedan hands, and the Mosque of Omar stands on the site of the temple of God. The important events of his history are given until the end, when the great tribulation and the first resurrection occur (Dan. 12:1, 2).

The time element is also mentioned in the twelfth chapter. "And from the time that the continual *burnt-offering* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three

## THE TIMES AND THE SEASONS

---

hundred and five and thirty days" (Dan. 12: 11, 12). Two periods of different lengths are here given: one of 1,290 years and one of 1,335 years. They begin with the setting up of the Mohammedan abomination, 637 A. D. The first period will end with the downfall of Turkey in 1927 A. D. The second will end in 1972 A. D. The intervening forty-five years will be occupied with the return and conversion of the Jews, the complete overthrow of all forms of apostasy, and the yielding of all earthly government to the Lamb of God and the blessed Prince and only Potentate. These periods may be illustrated in the following manner:

Mohammedan Desolation.	1,290 years.	Death-stroke to Turkey.
637 A. D.		1927 A. D.
Mohammedan Desolation.	1,335 years.	Sanctuary Completely Cleansed.
637 A. D.		1972 A. D.

What a glorious day that will be, when all of these forces of evil are overthrown and the Lord himself shall suddenly come to his temple. The government then "shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9: 6, 7).

We are privileged to live in a grand and awful time. The long-foretold events are hastening to

## THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

---

their realization and fulfillment. The child is now born whose span of life will reach to 1972 A. D. Scoffers will mock at the plain statements of God's word and will continue to their destruction. The nations will continue in their struggle until they crumble beneath the weight of debt and die because their citizens are slaughtered, but the wise, they who believe in Christ and his promises, will trim their lamps and fill them with oil, for the midnight cry has already been sounded: "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." Jesus said: "When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

When Noah warned his contemporaries of the approaching doom, they mocked, and were all destroyed. When Jesus came to the Jews, they "knew not the day of their visitation," and, as a consequence, an awful destruction was visited upon them and their city. The same will be true at this time. Jesus has foretold that the conditions should be the same as they were in the days of Noah (Matt. 24:38, 39). "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief: for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thess. 5:4-6). May this closing Scripture be heeded by an ever-increasing number, until Jesus comes, is our prayer.

## THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

Meaning of a few of the more important symbols of the Apocalypse. With a "Concordance," the student may easily determine for himself the Scriptural usage of all figurative terms.

SYMBOL	INTERPRETATION	PAGE
Air. Rev. 16: 17.	The medium through which the authority of a ruler is exercised, since it is the medium through which the sun's light and power are transmitted to the earth. Hence all law-enforcing officers in times of peace or armies in times of war.....	282
Altar of Burnt-offering. Rev. 6: 9.	Being the place where the slain sacrifice is offered, it is indicative of martyrdom. Ex. 29: 31-42 .....	116
Altar of Incense. Rev. 8: 3; 11: 1.	Being before the door of the Most Holy Place, it is symbolical of the means whereby the soul comes into intimate spiritual relationship with God. Hence it is indicative of the ordinances of the church and of worship. Lev. 4: 1-7; Heb. 9: 1-9.....	167

## THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

---

Ascension of the Witnesses. Rev. 11, 12.	Indicative of the exaltation of the Old and New Testaments. See "Witnesses." Hence a revival of Christianity ..... 201
Babylon. Rev. 17.	The Roman Catholic Church in contrast with the true church of Christ. Rev. 17: 1-6; Rev. 12: 1. 298
Balaam, Teaching of. Rev. 2: 14.	False religious teaching. Num. 31: 16 ..... 71
Balances. Rev. 6: 5.	Indicates scarcity and intolerable taxation. Ezek. 4: 16. .... 109
Bear. Rev. 13: 2.	Medo-Persia. Dan. 7: 5. .... 234
Beast.	Symbol of a kingdom. Dan. 7: 17, 23 ..... 228
Beast, Seven-headed and Ten-horned. Rev. 13: 1.	Professed Christian Roman Empire from 324 A. D. to 476 A. D., since the dragon gave his power to the beast. Rev. 13: 2. See "Dragon" ..... 227
Beast, Two-horned. Rev. 13: 11.	Western division of the Roman Empire under the government of barbarian emperors and bishops of the Roman Church from 476 A. D. to 666 A. D., and while the Papal government was developing. Rev. 13: 14, 15. .... 241
Beast, Image of. Rev. 13: 14-17.	The Papal government as manifested by the Papacy. .... 243
Beast, Mark of. Rev. 13: 16, 17.	Outward indication of allegiance to the Papacy ..... 246
Birds. Rev. 19: 17; Ezek. 39: 17.	Organizations of men having forms of self-government, such as political parties, labor-unions, etc. Dan. 4: 12; Acts 10: 12; Acts 1: 34, 35. .... 313



## THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

---

<b>Blasphemy.</b> Rev. 13: 5.	Laying claim to divine prerogatives. Mark 14: 61-64; John 10: 33 ..... 233
<b>Blood.</b> Rev. 8: 8.	Indicative of sanguinary warfare. 1 Kings 2: 5; 2 Kings 3: 22, 23.. 104
<b>Book, Sealed.</b> Rev. 5: 1.	Indicates that its contents are unrevealed ..... 89
<b>Book, Unsealed.</b>	Indicates that its contents are revealed ..... 90
<b>Book, Little.</b> Rev. 10: 2.	The New Testament being preached to the people and read by the people ..... 176
<b>Bowl.</b> Rev. 16: 1.	Indicative of divine judgment.... 264
<b>Candlesticks.</b> Rev. 1: 12.	Churches. Rev. 1: 20. Hence the complete life history of the visible church through seven periods ..... 55, 63
<b>Cast Down.</b> Rev. 12: 9.	Defeated, humiliated..... 217
<b>Crown.</b> Rev. 6: 2.	Symbol of the kingly office and authority ..... 101
<b>Cup.</b> Rev. 16: 19.	Indicative of bitter judgments.... 263
<b>Day.</b> Rev. 2: 10.	A day stands for a year. Ezek. 4: 6 ..... 68
<b>Defiled with Women.</b> Rev. 14: 4.	See "Fornication"... ..... 252
<b>Dragon.</b> Rev. 12: 3.	The Devil incarnate in the pagan Roman Empire, since he is the antagonist of the woman and her seed at the time of John's vision. Rev. 12: 9..... 213, 230
<b>Earth.</b> Rev. 12: 9.	Territory embraced under the authority of Rome..... 217

## THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

---

Earthquake. Rev. 6: 12.	Disruption of political government. It indicates the overthrow of one form of government and the establishment of another... 125
Egypt. Rev. 11: 8.	Place where chosen people of God suffered bondage, hence indi- cates the treading down of the church under the Papal domin- ion ..... 200
Elders. Rev. 4: 4.	Heavenly beings, intimately associ- ated with the throne of God... 84
Euphrates. Rev. 9: 14; 16: 12.	A symbol of the Turkish people and government..... 165
Fire. Rev. 8: 5.	Symbol of divine judgment. Gen- erally indicative of the ravages of war ..... 140
Fornication. Rev. 17: 2.	Apostasy from the true faith. Isa. 1: 21 ..... 303
Hail. Rev. 8: 7.	An instrument of destructive judg- ments ..... 140
Harlot. Rev. 17: 1.	The Roman Catholic Church..... 288
Harlots. Rev. 17: 5.	Churches which have come out of the Roman Church and still re- tain some of her apostate char- acteristics ..... 304
Heads. Rev. 17: 3.	Forms of government or dynasties. Generally succeeding each other. Rev. 17: 10 ..... 229
Heaven. Rev. 4: 1.	Place of throne and rule, hence in- dicates the place where power is exercised ..... 79, 129
Heaven, Fallen from. Rev. 12: 9, 10.	Indicates loss of power and au- thority ..... 218

## THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

---

Heaven, War in. Rev. 12: 7.	Indicates a spiritual contest, as between Christianity and paganism ..... 215
Horns, Seven. Rev. 5: 6.	Indicate that Christ has all authority and power ..... 93
Horns of the Beast. Rev. 13: 1; 17: 3.	Contemporary divisions of the Roman Empire, each being independent of the other. Rev. 17: 12 ..... 229
Horse, White. Rev. 6: 2.	The horse is a symbol of war. Prov. 21: 31. The color of the horse indicates the nature of the war. Hence white, which indicates prosperity and victory, would symbolize a successful war ..... 98
Horse, Red. Rev. 6: 3.	Indicative of civil war..... 103
Horse, Black. Rev. 6: 5.	Indicative of tribulation as a result of civil war..... 107
Horse, Pale. Rev. 6: 8.	Indicative of famine and pestilence in connection with war..... 111
Hour. Rev. 18: 17.	Small space of time. One-twelfth part of a day, hence one month. See "Day"..... 68
Islands. Rev. 6: 14.	Provinces or territorial divisions.. 129
Jerusalem, New. Rev. 3: 12; 21: 2.	The glorified church of Christ. Heb. 12: 22, 23..... 334
Jews. Rev. 2: 9; 3: 9.	The chosen people of God, and, hence, spiritual Israel. True Christians ..... 75
Jezebel. Rev. 2: 20.	The idolatrous wife of Ahab and associated with him in the government of the Northern kingdom, hence becomes a type of

## THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

---

	the Roman Catholic Church when associated with the tem- poral government of Rome.... 72
Leopard. Rev. 13: 2.	Grecian Empire. Dan. 7:6..... 234
Lightning. Rev. 8: 5.	Indicative of a political disturbance taking place ..... 86
Lion. Rev. 13: 2.	Babylonian kingdom. Dan. 7:4... 234
Locusts. Rev. 9: 3-11.	Mohammedan armies ..... 157
Man Child. Rev. 12: 5.	Christ raised from the dead. John 16: 21, 22; Isa. 66:7..... 211
Month. Rev. 11: 2.	Thirty years, since a day stands for a year..... 190
Moon. Rev. 6: 12.	Receives its light from the sun, hence becomes the symbol of the ruler who is immediately as- sociated with the chief ruler. In Rev. 12:1 it symbolizes the Mosaic dispensation..... 126
Mountain. Rev. 6: 14.	A kingdom. Compare Dan. 2: 35 and Dan. 2: 44..... 129
Outer Court. Rev. 11: 2.	The outer court contained the al- tar of burnt-offerings and the laver of cleansing, hence its treading down signifies that the ordinances of the church are changed ..... 189
Reed. Rev. 11: 1.	The New Testament as the only rule of faith and practice..... 187
Rivers. Rev. 16: 12.	Nations. Armies in motion. Isa. 8:7 ..... 147
Scorpions. Rev. 9: 5.	Indicative of bitter burdens and experiences. 1 Kings 2: 11.... 157

## THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

---

Sea. Rev. 7: 1.	The multitude of mankind. We use the same sort of a figurative expression in "a sea" of faces. See Waters"..... 132
Sodom. Rev. 11: 8.	City of wickedness, and, hence, same as Babylon or the Roman Catholic Church..... 299
Souls under the Altar. Rev. 6: 9.	Martyrs. See "Altar of Burnt-offering" ..... 116
Stars. Rev. 6: 13.	Conspicuous men in places of power and authority. Gen. 37: 9, 10. Hence, in Rev. 12: 1, the twelve apostles. Also Rev. 1: 16, stars represent the ministry during the seven periods of the church. They are interpreted as angels. Rev. 1: 20. Hence ministering spirits. Heb. 1: 14...59, 126
Sun. Rev. 6: 12.	Supreme ruler. Most brilliant political or religious leader. Gen. 37: 9, 10. Hence Christ is referred to as the Sun of righteousness. See Rev. 12: 1..... 126
Sun, Darkening of. Rev. 6: 12.	Loss of authority by a supreme ruler ..... 125
Sword. Rev. 6: 4.	An instrument of divine judgment, and indicative of war. Ezek. 21: 9, 10..... 104
Sword, Two- edged Rev. 1: 16; 19: 15.	The Bible. Eph. 6: 17; Heb. 4: 12. 320
Tails. Rev. 9: 10.	A symbol of authority among the Turks ..... 170
Temple of God. Rev. 11: 1.	The visible church of Christ. 1 Cor. 3: 16 ..... 188

## THE MORE IMPORTANT SYMBOLS

---

<b>Thunder.</b> Rev. 6: 1.	Indicative of political disturbance. 86
<b>Thunders, Seven.</b> Rev. 10: 3.	Papal anathemas hurled against the Reformers ..... 176
<b>Time, Times and Half a Time.</b> Rev. 12: 14.	Same as 1,260 prophetic days. Rev. 12: 6. Hence 1,260 years. A time, therefore, is one prophetic year ..... 184
<b>Tree. Rev. 7: 1.</b>	A kingdom. Dan. 4: 20-22..... 132
<b>Trees, Olive.</b> Rev. 11: 4.	Spiritual Israel under the old dispensation and spiritual Israel under the new dispensation. Rom. 11: 17-24. See, also, Zech. 4: 3-14. As witnesses the olive-trees indicate the Old and New Testaments. John 5: 39; Acts 1: 8 ..... 194
<b>Trumpet.</b> Rev. 1: 10.	Signal for the assembly of armies and indicative of military struggles. Num. 10: 9..... 55
<b>Waters.</b> Rev. 12: 15.	Peoples and nations. Rev. 17: 15.. 222
<b>Winds. Rev. 7: 1.</b>	Destructive agencies such as armies ..... 132
<b>Woman.</b> Rev. 12: 1.	Spiritual Israel. The true church of Christ ..... 210
<b>Zion. Rev. 14: 1.</b>	The kingdom of Christ, otherwise the church. Heb. 12: 22, 23.... 253



# TOPICAL INDEX

TOPIC	PAGE	TOPIC	PAGE
Angel, Strong.....	175	Heavens, The New.....	334
Seventh .....	202	Harlot, The Great.....	285
Announcement of Woes.	152	Horn, The Grecian Little.	357
Armageddon .....	258, 282		
Armies of Heaven.....	308	Judgment, The Last.....	332
Author of Revelation....	37	Letters, Ephesus .....	64
		Smyrna .....	66
Babylon, The Mystery of	289	Pergamum .....	70
Beast, Mark of.....	246	Thyatira .....	72
Image of .....	243	Sardis .....	73
Seven-headed .....	227	Philadelphia .....	73
Two-horned .....	241	Laodicea .....	76
Bird Feast .....	312	Life, Duration of.....	344
Book, Vision of the			
Sealed .....	89	Measured, Things .....	188
Bride, Wife of the Lamb.	285	Measurement of the Tem- ple .....	187
Candlesticks, The Vision.	53	Meaning of the Times... 351	
Mystery Revealed ....	57	Millennium .....	327
Catastrophe, The Last... 255			
Creatures, The Living... 87		Place .....	39
		Plagues, First .....	263
Door Open in Heaven... 81		Second .....	265
Dragon and the Woman. 207		Third .....	266
		Fourth .....	268
Earth, The New.....	334	Fifth .....	270
Elders, The.....	84	Sixth .....	271
		Seventh .....	282
Frogs, The Three.....	276	Prophecy, A Neglected Theme .....	11
Infidelity .....	254	Scope and Purpose....	17

## TOPICAL INDEX

---

TOPIC	PAGE	TOPIC	PAGE
Value of .....	12	Septiform Law in the	
How to Understand..	22	Scripture .....	345
Reed, The.....	187	Seven Times .....	355
Reformation .....	253	Signs, The First.....	209
Restoration .....	191	The Second .....	209
Resurrection, The First		The Third .....	260
.....256,	322	Solar and Lunar Domin-	
Return of the Jews.....	325	ion .....	342
Revelation, Author .....	37	Temple Measured .....	187
Place .....	39	in Heaven.....	208
How to Study.....	40	The Closing of.....	261
Structure .....	42	Thunders, The Seven....	176
Outline .....	44	Time .....	38, 341
Inscription .....	47	Times, Seven .....	355
Salutation and Dedic-		Visions Cease .....	335
tion .....	51		
Satan Loosed .....	330	War in Heaven .....	215
Seals		Winds, First .....	140
First Seal .....	98	Second .....	143
Second Seal .....	103	Third .....	145
Third Seal .....	107	Fourth .....	147
Fourth Seal .....	111	Witnesses, The Two.....	194
Fifth Seal .....	115	Woman and the Dragon. 207	
Sixth Seal .....	122	Woes	
Seventh Seal .....	137	Announcement .....	152
Sealing God's Servants..	131	First .....	156
Second Coming of the		Second .....	164
Lord .....	281	Third .....	282













BS2827 .W72

The Revelation of Jesus Christ : a study

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 00034 0697